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A Bathing Ape turns out to be more than monkey business.



北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY



'My Dream' returns to the capital's stage after a North American tour. Page 16



The passion, the pride, the piss up, the pull-out (see inside)

Dyed pets die to make cash for unlicensed traders Page 6



A traditional Zhejiang Opera performer displays her art to 100 young French artists yesterday in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province.

Xinhua Photo

Chinese fans prepare for world cup of joy and suffering

By Han Manman

The FIFA World Cup will be kicking off in Germany today (or rather, in the early hours of tomorrow morning Beijing time). Tens of thousands of local fans are eagerly anticipating the feast of football ahead. But because most of the 64 games will be played after midnight Beijing time, some fans have even begun to adjust their sleep schedules to German time.

A survey by online recruitment portal Zhaopin.com asked Chinese workers how the World Cup would affect them. Over 80 percent said they would be watching at least some

matches, with 20 percent claiming they will not miss a single match throughout the tournament. Most fans described themselves as taking a 'rational' approach to the game and say watching football will not impact their work. Ten percent admitted that they plan to arrive late for work, with a dedicated one percent having arranged time off or even prepared to resign in order to follow all the matches over the month of the finals.

"Believe it or not, the World Cup in my heart is much more important than my work. I don't mind if I lose my job because of the world cup. I can find another one afterwards. But if I miss this tournament, I will have to wait for four years for the next one," said Mr Xu, an IT company employee. He plans to pass a month

of sleepless nights watching the world cup in bars.

Mr Xu is an extreme case - most fans are taking a more selective approach to watching the tournament unfold.

"Of course I will watch the matches that kick off at midnight, it only happens every four years. I don't want to miss it, especially Poland's group matches," said Ireneusz Jagielski, who works at the Polish embassy. "Four years ago, I spent pleasant evenings with my friends in the Sanlitun bars, but because the matches are on too late this time, I will watch them at home," said Jagielski, adding that he was planning to sleep just two hours in the morning before going to work as usual.

Office worker Mr Huang thinks

the World Cup is a major physical challenge for fans as well as players: "I have to watch at midnight again. The last time I did that was the 1998 world cup." Huang said he will not watch every match this time, but there are some teams - Brazil, Italy, Holland, England, Argentina and Spain - whose games he won't miss.

A survey of 100 company personnel officers found 30 percent worried that the World Cup will affect employee performance. But 34 percent said they would relax rules on punctuality and turn a blind eye to minor lateness, since it is such a special occasion. Some believe the world cup is a great opportunity to for their company to get to know their staff better and improved their employment relationship.

Partial amnesty offered to bribe-taking health workers

By Jiang Xubo

Beijing's medical staff are being offered a partial amnesty in the latest bid to tackle the endemic culture of bribery affecting the city's health system.

Health chiefs in the capital have opened a special bank account and are urging medical staff to turn in any bribes they may have taken at work.

Medical institutions across

the city have been told to carry out internal investigations into bribery over the next two months. Medical workers who have taken kickbacks from drugs companies for buying their medicines, medical appliances or consumable materials have been told to turn in the cash to their hospitals. Hospitals will then pay the money into the bank account set up by the Beijing Health

Bureau, which will remain open until the end of July.

Medical staff who hand over bribe money before the deadline will receive a less severe punishment or no punishment at all.

Drugs companies, sales companies and medical products producers discovered to have offered bribes will be blacklisted and denied further deals for the next two years.

Local authorities launched the campaign against bribery in the health service across the city in April.

In a similar amnesty last year, 115 medical workers handed in around 260,000 yuan (US\$32,000) in kickbacks from medical companies and over 1,100 people handed in around 850,000 yuan (US\$106,000) gift money from patients.

Ancient relic display offers unique peak into the past

By Chen Shasha

Visitors to the National Museum will get a unique peak into the past this month as 100 national treasures from across China are put on display.

The exhibits, which include an ancient Shang Dynasty cooking vessel - the largest in China - shadowgraphs, Tang Dynasty poems and Ming and Qing Dynasty furniture, were selected from over 200 million relics nationwide.

They are being displayed at the National Museum until July 10 to celebrate China's first ever Cultural Heritage Day on Saturday.

Around 900 million yuan has been invested in the protection of cultural relics in Beijing since the year 2000, said Wang Yuwei, the director general of the city's Cultural Relic Protection Bureau. But he added that many cultural relics remained in danger. Millions of China's relics are stored in more than 200 museums in 47 countries. Until recently, over 90 percent of the pieces on show this month would have been housed in museums abroad. But a recent government funded 'buy back' scheme has seen China's national museums buying relics back from museums in Europe and the US.

China's State Council named this Saturday as Cultural Heritage Day to strengthen the protection of the country's heritage and relics.

The exhibition, which marks the day, will run until July 10, with tickets priced at five yuan each for group bookings. To get there, take the No. 4, No. 1 or No. 37 bus to Tian'anmen Square.



A sign is unveiled at the site of the old Beiping Library, one of a batch of newly identified and marked national level cultural monuments in the city. Xinhua Photo

Your chance to vote on Olympic designs

By Jackie Zhang

Beijingers are being given the chance to have their say about the design of the Beijing Olympics.

An exhibition of over 1,900 sculptures and public amenity designs went on show at the Beijing Planning Exhibition Hall on Tuesday and visitors got to vote on their favorites. Organizers will pick the most popular

designs and get them built.

"The designs on show are standby schemes for the construction of Beijing Olympics Garden and stadiums," said Yu Huayun, director of Beijing City Sculpture Construct & Supervise Office. "People can vote for their favorite designs. Some of the designs will be implemented. Some sculptures will be placed in the Beijing Olympics

Garden, Olympics avenues and proper locations in the city."

More than 5,000 designs have been collected from more than 700 art colleges and professional artists since November. Around 500 of the design ideas were collected from designers from 42 countries.

The exhibition - which runs until July 9 and is free - displays 400 space models and 1500 plane designs.

Knock one out of the park

By Wang Xiaoyuan

The Chinese Softball Association will mark World Softball Day (June 13) with an event entitled 'I Love Softball' at Beijing Muxiyuan Stadium this Sunday.

The event will start at 8.30am

and last through the day. The national women's softball team, which is now training in the stadium, will put on a performance in the afternoon. The Softball Association will donate sports facilities and equipment to students from four schools in Beijing.

The highpoints will be the tee ball, slow pitch and fast pitch softball games open to fans and players of all levels. Teams from universities and the Beijing Softball League will join the games to display their skills and share the fun of softball.

Couples flock to tie the knot on the 'luckiest day of the century'

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Over 3,000 couples tied the knot on Tuesday - considered by Chinese as being one of the luckiest days of the century.

An emergency plan of action was rolled out in 19 marriage registry offices across Beijing as staff braced themselves for an unprecedented number of marriages.

Tuesday, the sixth day of the

sixth month of the year 2006, was considered a particularly auspicious day for Chinese people.

Liu An, who started to queue at 6.00am with her fiancé, had to wait six hours, before finally getting her lucky marriage certificate at the Haidian registry office.

"We were given the queuing number 96 (nine sounds like Jiu, which means 'long' in Chinese),

which was also a very lucky omen for our marriage," she said. "One of the couples there had been queuing since 8.00pm on Monday!"

The rush to marry was seen across China. In Zhengzhou, Henan Province, the number of marriage registrations was up four times on a normal day.

The number six is one of the luckiest numbers in China, and

is believed to mean that the marriage will be a success. Ironically, the number 666 is considered to be the sign of the devil in the West. According to the Book of Revelations, it is the mark of the Beast. In many states in America, pregnant women tried to postpone giving birth to prevent their babies being "marked by the number of the beast".

Campaign against illegal cabbies at capital's airport

By Jiang Xubo

Beijing's traffic chiefs launched a 20-day campaign against illegal cabs touting business at the Beijing Capital International Airport (BCIA) on Wednesday.

A team of 70 officials from the city's Traffic Enforcement Authority, Municipal Public Security Bureau and public security branch at the BCIA will crack down on drivers who tout for business in foreign languages, force foreign passengers into their cabs or adjust their taximeters to overcharge customers.

Illegal cabs may be impounded. And drivers who pose as legitimate cabbies and those who cheat or overcharge passengers (especially foreigners) face fines of up to 500,000 yuan (US\$62,000). The worst offenders face reeducation through labor or prison sentences.

New York's Museum of Modern Art opens first exhibition in China

By Chu Meng

One of China's most expensive building projects - the CCTV Plaza - is the focus of Beijing's first ever exhibition by the New York-based Museum of Modern Art.

The world-famous museum has put together an exhibition on China's contemporary architecture and the role it plays on the country's modern art industry, focusing on the massive, five billion yuan building project.

It is being held in the Courtyard Art Gallery, chosen because of its unique location directly across from the East Gate of the Forbidden City in a traditional courtyard house that was originally part of the Imperial Palace.

Kung Fu film hero splashes his cash on three luxury pads

By Qiu Jiaoning

Hong Kong action film star Cheung Long (Jacky Cheung) has splashed out on three luxury downtown properties in Beijing's Dongzhimen area. The properties were priced at US\$4,000 per square meter.

The movie star - famed for his Kung Fu action flicks - bought one of the three properties for his father, a fan of Dongzhimen. Eight of Cheung's friends have also forked out for properties in the area.

Hong Kong's film stars including Liang Jiahui, Guan Zhilin and Liu Jialing have all bought high-end downtown properties in the city.

Brands and Beijing retailers call truce on IPR violations

By Wang Xiaoyuan

A memorandum signed this Wednesday will see Beijing retail markets and international brand owners join together to fight against the sale of counterfeit goods in the city. The signing ceremony received the backing of Peter Mandelson, the European Commissioner for Trade.

The memorandum sets out a new framework under which trademark owners and retail market owners can cooperate in the fight

against the selling or offering for sale of counterfeit goods under a proposed 'two-strike rule'. If presented with evidence that a particular vendor is in violation of the rules, market owners will stop the vendor from trading for a given period. If the same vendor is found selling counterfeits of any of the participating brands again, their lease will be terminated and they will be ejected from the market.

Landlords of major Beijing retail markets

agreed to work with the brand owners to develop a new standard rental agreement. This will clarify vendor's obligations to respect intellectual property rights and set out the potential consequences of trading in counterfeiting in greater detail. Regular market surveys at the major markets will test how the rule is working and report any violations directly to the landlords for action. As long as market landlords implement this agreement, brand owners

will not litigate against them directly.

Mandelson, who this week met with Bo Xilai, China's Minister of Commerce, to discuss further collaboration between the European Union and China on protecting intellectual property rights, said that the rule should be expanded to other cities in China.

The memorandum was made possible after five judgments issued by the Beijing Higher People's Court against the landlord

of Silk Street Market, in response to complaints by five European luxury brands: Burberry, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, and Prada.

Commenting on the memorandum on behalf of the participating brand owners, Nathalie Moule Berteaux, trademark counsel for Louis Vuitton, said, "Today's agreement is a private sector solution to the harm caused by counterfeiting, and will hopefully result in significant changes in Beijing markets."

Stem cell beauty injection illness claimed

By Chen Shasha

A recent CCTV program revealed that a woman named Gao Yu became seriously ill after being injected with stem cell beauty products. The program claimed the 250,000-yuan drug was in fact extracted from the human embryo, which may cause diseases if the batch is infected.

After the scandal was revealed, the Xi Bolai Company in Guangzhou, which produced the stem cell beauty injection, seemingly vanished, its telephone number having been transferred to a private citizen. Now, Gao Yu is still in pain, and a definitive diagnosis has yet to be made.

In the advertisement, it is said that the injection can make people look 10 to 15 years younger. The advertisement claims it is different from traditional beauty drugs as it is abstracted from early human embryos and then cloned by using advanced technology. They also claim cancer-causing genes in the body can be repaired to help people resist cancer.

"I thought it was an advanced product beyond the goat embryo cell extracts before

watching the program," said Ma Yun, a young woman who planned to have the treatment.

But according to Liu Bin, professor at the Organ-Embryo department of Beijing Medical University, there is no research to show that stem cells could be used as an anti-aging product. He claimed that there was no reason to use cloned cells described in the advertisement because the regular human stem cells can split themselves and do not need the help of cloned cells.

There are many other companies still producing the stem cell beauty injection. The product can be found in many parlors in Beijing, as well as some beauty departments of hospitals. Xie Yi, manager of a stem cell product company named Melina, said all their products were extracted from human embryos. But Beijing Modern Women's Hospital, which uses Melina's stem cell beauty injections, said the product is a synthetic one, containing no traces of human embryo. The cost of the injection is from 20,000 to 100,000 yuan.



Ten coal miners are still missing after a coal mine flooded in Chongqing yesterday.

XinHua Photo

Ultimate low-budget horror flick

By Wang Xiaoyuan

A group of Shanghai office workers have raised the expression 'low-budget horror movie' to a whole new level, producing their online horror flick Voodoo for the princely sum of 1,000 yuan.

Fittingly, the movie had its premier at an old warehouse in Shanghai last Sunday.

Made with the support of

www.toodou.com, the forty-eight-minute movie was shot in the office building where the 'cast and crew' work. The ones involved are colleagues

Voodoo tells a story of Shu Ping, a character that has to endure the jealousy of her colleagues, and also gets involved in complicated relationships.

She falls in love with a colleague, Simon, who is in a rela-

tionship with another colleague, Lin Ran. During a late night of working overtime, a series of murders happens.

Gao Bao, the director, photographer and editor, and Sammi, the screenwriter, are two ordinary office workers in a communications company. Both of them are DV fans. "We were just tired of the office routines and pressures. We decided it

would add new energy to our lives if we did something different," said Gao. Sammi said, "It seems only a movie that makes people scream and can really make you relaxed."

Cece, the producer of Voodoo, said, "The movie cost only 1,000 yuan. All we bought were a movable hard disk, a 1394 digital video capture card and some DV tapes."

(By Jiang Xubo)

Brief news

Draft of anti-monopoly law approved

The State Council, China's central government, approved in principle a draft of an anti-monopoly law Wednesday, according to Xinhua News Agency.

New bird flu case

A new H5N1 bird flu case in poultry has been discovered in the western Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region this Wednesday, according to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Paralympic marketing program launched

The Beijing 2008 Paralympic marketing program was officially launched Monday to about 500 Chinese and international business leaders, according to the Beijing Organizing Committee.

Pollution producers closed

Over 2,600 enterprises were shut down for having caused serious environmental pollution last year, according to a white paper entitled 'Environmental Protection in China (1996-2005)' issued this week by the Information Office of the State Council.

Free operations for poor blind people

A total of over 200,000 impoverished blind people suffering from cataracts will get free operations within the next five years, thanks to a joint program launched by the China Welfare Fund for the Handicapped and the China Disabled Persons' Federation.

China as 'world leader' in artificial rain

Beijing, June 4 (*Reuters/Sydney Morning Herald*) – Drought-plagued China has used an arsenal of rockets, artillery and aircraft to seed clouds and produce enough artificial rain to fill one of the country's biggest rivers four times over, Xinhua said.

China has created 'the world's leading force' in artificially inducing rain to relieve droughts and fight fires, the official news agency said, citing the National Meteorological Bureau.

"Its aircraft alone have undertaken enough missions to fill four Yellow Rivers, the country's second longest river, in the past five years," it said.

Engineers 'seed' clouds by burning chemicals such as silver iodide to induce rain to ease droughts, prevent hail and help extinguish fires, Xinhua said.

In 2,840 flights from 2001 to 2005, cloud seeding by aircraft brought down 210 billion cubic meters of water over an area making up nearly a third of China's territory, a bureau official said.

The scheme employed more than 3,000 people with an arsenal of 7,000 cannon and 4,687 rocket launchers, the official told a meeting in Jinan, capital of Shandong.



Workers head to their work places armed with umbrellas as rain continues. (AFP Photo)

Interview with the reporter:

My first impression was that the story was very interesting: China has the science and technology to control the weather and produce artificial rain.

But we have to realize that the fundamental issue is that Beijing is severely short of water. The first step to solving this problem will be to launch a public campaign to teach people to save water.

Heavy restrictions must be imposed against wasting water. Prices for excess water use should be

much higher. Otherwise, everyone will have to pay more for the water and even the air we consume in the future.

Twenty five years ago, people in Australia weren't worried about trash disposal and wasted a lot of water. The government ran public education campaigns and imposed restrictions. Things are much better today.

— **Maryanne Toy, Sydney Morning Herald, Beijing**

Beijing raises the bar on free bus rides

Beijing, June 2 (*Reuters / The Scotsman*) – Chinese children are getting taller, forcing the Beijing city government to raise the height limit for free bus rides and other perks by 10 cm, state media said.

"Because of the growth in height, China's 360 million children have run into problems of buying tickets," Xinhua said.

Regulations adopted in 1949, when the Communists came to power, originally stated that any child both below seven years of age and below 1.1 meters was eligible for free bus rides, free entry to parks and theatres and free school lunches.

Xinhua said the average height of a Chinese five-year-old was currently 1.2 meters, meaning a lot of children aged between five and seven felt they were being short changed.

Now the height limit stands at 1.2 meters in Beijing and at 1.3 meters in the northeastern province of Liaoning and in Zhengzhou, the capital of central Henan province.

Interview with the reporter:

The Scotsman published this report because it is about a common practice around the world, particularly in developed countries. And we're glad that China is catching up.

In Britain, we have free entry for babies at public facilities like transportation, cinemas, museums, exhibitions, parks and sports facilities, and discount entries to children and young people. But we don't have a hard standard to apply preferential treatment. It all depends on the generosity of the service providers.

British railway offers discounts to young people under 26. You can pay 16 pounds each year to get 30 percent off any tickets you buy in the year. As I am 26 this year, I feel this is very important, because young people, generally poor students, don't have that much money, but they are the group in our society most eager to get out and see the outside world.

— **Benjamin Robertson, Journalist, The Scotsman, Beijing**

Beijing to clean up bar scene



Patrons at a downtown Beijing bar. (AFP Photo)

Beijing, June 8 (*Todayonline.com*) – Beijing will clean up its bustling nightlife ahead of the 2008 Olympics to stamp out drugs, prostitution and under-aged drinking in city bars and dance halls.

In an effort to curb 'unhealthy' tendencies, entertainment venues will be rated A, B, or C in accordance with how they measure up to joint inspections carried out by city police, commerce and cultural authorities, the Beijing News reported.

"By the 2008 Olympic Games, the city's

entertainment spots will be drug free, that is our goal," the paper quoted vice police chief He Angang as saying.

Violations of laws and regulations uncovered during the inspections will result in a lower rating and could lead to fines and venue closures, it said.

Of particular concern to Beijing's growing expatriate community, drinking establishments must stop serving newly arrived customers after 2 am in the morning as of August 1, the report said.

Interview with the editor:

We used this report because we have faced similar problems in Singapore, particularly over the past five years. We hope Beijing's success can provide a good example for us to curb these problems.

As the first step, the police need to find and fine heavily a number of the bad bars and clubs, as a lesson to the others.

But the fundamental solution, I believe, is public education, for young people in particular, to warn them away from drugs, prostitution and alcohol abuse.

We are all deeply impressed by the rapid growth and transformation, high buildings and crowded population of China.

But I personally worry about the massive destruction of old buildings.

— **Sharon Vasso, editor, Todayonline.com, Singapore**



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China Mobile to purchase Phoenix TV stakes

Beijing, June 8 (XFN-ASIA) – China Mobile Ltd announced today that it will acquire 20 percent of Phoenix Satellite Television from News Corp. in preparation for the launch of third-generation (3G) cellphone services.

News Corp has a 38 percent

stake in the Hong Kong-based Phoenix. China Mobile is expected to pay cash for the shares, valued over HK\$1 billion. The deal will help China Mobile offer TV content to cellphone users.

It was unclear what Rupert Murdoch, the chairman of News

Corp, intends to do with his remaining 18 percent stake in Phoenix.

Murdoch reportedly felt Phoenix had not done enough to push News Corp's expansion into China. But sources say that Murdoch is expected to release a statement endorsing the deal –

a signal that he is unlikely to sell his remaining stake any time soon.

Murdoch has not given up hope of penetrating the Chinese market, assuming that having China Mobile as a partner in Phoenix TV could help News Corp's expansion in China.

McDonald's to open drive throughs

Beijing, June 5 (Pravda) – Fast food giant McDonald's is planning its first drive-through in Beijing by next year, according to Jeffrey Schwartz, chief executive for McDonald's China.

McDonald's first came to China 15 years ago and now operates 760 stores in the country. It opened its first drive-through in Guangdong last December and added a second one this year in Guangdong and a third one in Shanghai.

Pfizer wins Viagra case

Beijing, June 5 (AP) – The Beijing No.1 Intermediate People's Court overturned a 2004 decision by China's patent review board, ruling out the local drug makers to sell generic version of Viagra in China.

A dozen Chinese drug companies have been seeking the right to make sildenafil citrate, the main active ingredient in the erectile dysfunction drug, challenging Pfizer's exclusive right to the blue pill.

Pfizer welcomed the decision.

SonyEricsson sets logistics center

Shanghai, June 5 (Interfax) – SonyEricsson Mobile Communications announced to establish its first centralized global logistics center in Beijing at its inaugural global supplier conference.

SonyEricsson now has 170 suppliers in China and is planning to expand its upper-level supplier base.

Over the last few years, SonyEricsson's purchases in China have increased tremendously from 5 billion yuan (US\$625 million) in 2003 to 10.5 billion (US\$1.3 billion) in 2004 and 22 billion (US\$2.75 billion) in 2005.

Cathay Pacific to acquire Dragonair

London, June 7 (newratings.com) – Hong Kong's largest airline Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd plans to buyout rival Dragonair in a deal worth US\$1.3 billion.

Cathay Pacific, which currently holds a 17.8 percent stake in Dragonair, is in advanced stages of takeover discussions with the latter company's parent, China National Aviation Co Ltd (CNAC).

Dragonair is owned by Swire Pacific, CITIC Pacific and China National Aviation Co Ltd.

The acquisition has been anticipated for a long time and would make Cathay Pacific Airways the biggest carrier in Asia. More importantly, it will provide Cathay Pacific with the most profitable routes to mainland China.

China National Aviation has sought to suspend trading in shares of Cathay Pacific Airways, CITIC Pacific, Swire Pacific and CNAC, all of which are involved in the takeover talks.



Landing for auction

A landing plane of the Brazilian airline Varig is reflected from the Congonhas airport passenger tower in San Paulo. Varig, Brazil's flagship carrier,

will land on the auction block to avoid bankruptcy, pricing its fleet and international and domestic routes at a minimum bid of US\$860 million.

The airline is saddled with debt of more than US\$ 3 billion and has been operating under bankruptcy protection for a year. (AFP Photo)

Wenzhou businessman buys Arab TV station

Beijing, June 3 (Xinhua) – A businessman from Wenzhou City of Zhejiang Province, has purchased a United Arab Emirates state-owned television station.

The new owner, Wang Weisheng, who left Wenzhou for the UAE more than 10 years ago, has changed the TV station name to 'Arab Alibaba Business Satellite TV'.

The TV station start broadcasting on August 1. It is the first

TV station in the Middle East to be owned by a Chinese.

Wang, now in Guangzhou City, in Guangdong Province, told local media that preparations were in full swing. He said he had set up a Chinese office for the TV station in Guangzhou, and planned to look for advertising clients from this month.

The TV station used to be under Dubai Media City and featured entertainment programs

and broadcasts in Arabic and English via the Nilesat satellite.

The station could cover 21 Arabic countries and 400 million people in the Middle East and North Africa.

The station's audience share declined last year. Dubai Media City invited Wang to provide programs, TV series or films introducing Chinese scenes and news. Instead, Wang proposed to purchase the TV station.

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Dyed pets die to make cash for unlicensed traders

By Chen Shasha

"I didn't know it had been dyed when I bought it," said Zhang Ying, the unhappy purchaser of a four-month-old puppy that died of poisoning just five days after Ms Zhang brought it home.

More and more pet buyers in Beijing are finding that their lovable animal companions have been dyed to make them more attractive sales prospects. Worse, this is causing the creatures serious illness and even killing some. Yet, says Ji Yan, a veterinarian at a city pet clinic, "It's hard to tell if your pet has been dyed if you lack professional knowledge."

Several of the pets being brought to Dr Ji's clinic have been with their owners less than one week. "The animals were wasting away, and their eyes were streaming with tears, having been dyed blue or black to improve their looks," said Dr Ji. Some animals mistreated in this way can recover after careful treatment, but many die because, says Ji, "The dye stuff used is low quality and can do serious harm."

Heartbroken

Zhang Ying was heartbroken when her puppy died. She bought the animal from a trader operating under a footbridge near the China World Trade Center. The puppy cost only 200 yuan, but treatment fees came to almost 3,000 yuan.

Ms Zhang says she has no plans to lodge a formal complaint since, "I don't have any proof I can use in a compensation claim."

There are many unlicensed pet dealers in the city. They buy animals cheap, and then dye them so they can claim they are a rare breed and thus be sold for more. The pets were often abandoned or sold on the Internet by previous owners who no longer want to keep them. The animals are typically in poor health, but the canny dealers have a variety of tricks to make them appear healthy and beautiful.

"Dyeing is just one method," says Dr Ji, "Another common trick is to inject animals with stimulants, especially those with serious illnesses." Ji says this can make the animal appear temporarily excited and playful, which appeals to buyers. However, the stimulants can cause serious harm to small animals, damaging motor functions and sometimes causing death.

Unlicensed

At Guan Yuan market, many traders work the street, cautiously enquiring whether passers-by are looking to buy a dog. "We are not allowed to sell dogs publicly without a trading license," said one trader, surnamed Zhang. At her home, dozens of Pomeranians, Pekingese, and poodles live



Dyeing makes pets seriously ill. This cat was later humanely killed.

Photo by Cheng Jiang

crushed together in a small dark corner. "They are purebred dogs of course," claimed Zhang. "Tell you what, you can have one for 800 yuan," she said, pointing out a two-month-old white Pomeranian. Zhang claimed that all the dogs she sells are purchased abroad.

"They are all laid off workers on low incomes, how can they be buying dogs from overseas?" said one of Zhang's neighbors, surnamed Li. Li said many of her neighbors are selling dogs from their homes, and added, "It has become a major source of income of many families living in Guan Yuan." Most of these dog dealers have neither trading or dog licenses. "Dogs

cost only 200 to 800 yuan, but a dog license is 1,000 yuan each," said Zhang, explaining her failure to license her animals.

Dog dealers without these two licenses are not always punished. "As long as they are selling from their home, and they don't draw the kind of public attention that would make the head of our bureau take notice, it is OK," said Jiang, a Xijiekou district municipal enforcement officer out on patrol with two colleagues.

Li Huiping, secretary general of the Beijing Pets Protection Association, adds that, "As for the dyeing of these dogs, there are no laws to prevent it at the moment."

Expressions of displeasure at unmasking of face-changing secrets

By Jackie Zhang

The secrets of rapid face-changing, a traditional performing technique in Sichuan opera (*Chuanju*), have been revealed abroad, according to master of the art, Wang Daozheng.

Face-changing is unique to Sichuan Opera. Actors change their faces by swapping masks almost instantaneously with a quick wave of their hands or swiftly turning around. Top professionals may change as many as 15 masks during a single performance.

Foreigners

The 68-year-old Wang Daozheng is one of the most famous *Chuanju* opera actors. In 1987, he went to perform in Japan. Local artistes offered him US\$50,000 to be taught his secret technique, but Wang turned them down. In 2000, another group of Japanese enthusiasts made a similar offer but Wang again kept his knowledge of face-changing to himself.

When Wang returned to Japan in 2002, he was surprised to find many Japanese actors performing face-changing on the public stage. "A local friend of mine told me that it was a Chinese *Chuanju* opera actor that taught the Japanese performers the technique - and, apparently, for very little money," said Wang. When Wang later visited South Korea, Germany, and Singapore, he also



The ancient art of face-changing may be a state secret. CFP Photo

found performers in those countries using the face-changing technique on stage, albeit with only crude skills and poor costumes.

Wang Daozheng said a lot of people have been learning face-changing in China in recent years. "Lots of people perform face-changing at various venues, such as night clubs, pubs, and sauna spas. People even put advertisements online saying they can teach face-changing for low prices. The over-use of face-changing performances have spoiled this unique technique and made it worthless," says Wang. "It makes me disappointed and broken-hearted that some *Chuanju* opera actors disclosed the secret of face-changing to foreigners just for money."

Online adverts offering to teach face-changing do indeed exist. Different notices offer to teach face-

changing for a variety of prices.

Cheap training

Mr He, claiming to be an ex-*Chuanju* opera actor, teaches students in Beijing. The cost to learn face-changing is 3,000 yuan, 1,000 of which students must pay in advance. "In about one week, training one hour per day, you can master the basic techniques of face-changing and can change at least 10 masks at one time," Mr He claims.

Asked to comment on the view that face-changing techniques should be kept secret and not be taught to ordinary people, He thought this was not the case, adding, "At present, I already have two students in Beijing. People can come to learn it at their convenience. But I suggest to him or her to come over to meet me. Our teaching should be done secretly."

Many of the online adverts offered to teach the technique at far cheaper prices than Mr He.

"We do not allow the technique of face-changing to be taught to people who do not work in *Chuanju* opera," said the personnel director of the Sichuan Provincial Theater, surnamed Huang. "The face-changing technique is the shared heritage of *Chuanju* actors, but telling people outside of opera circles how to perform it is considered to be revealing our secrets."

State secret

In Wang Daozheng's view, "The technique of face-changing is a unique skill created and perfected by *Chuanju* opera actors over the generations. It was listed as a level-two state secret in 1987 and should be well-protected."

However, staff at the Ministry of Culture said they have not yet found any documents explicitly stating that the technique of face-changing was listed as a state secret as Wang claims. "We will have to consult the archives to see whether that is true," said an officer in the ministry's law department, "Besides, the situation in China is different now. In the 1980s, people may have thought they had to protect traditional Chinese performance techniques. That may be different now because of reform and opening-up."

Pet lovers warned of online scam

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Online animal defenders have condemned a woman they accuse of defrauding kind-hearted people out of abandoned dogs they saved, in order to resell the animals for profit. They are cautioning animal lovers to be on their guard against online swindlers.

Rose Gao is a dog lover who often rescues abandoned dogs off the city's streets. She saved a six-month-old Boston Terrier at the end of April, that she named Niuniu. She posted messages on forums at popular Internet portal Sina looking for a good home for Niuniu. Rose soon got many replies expressing interest, as Boston Terriers are an expensive breed.

A woman calling herself Li Jie called and promised that if Niuniu came to live with her, she would ensure the dog was given all necessary treatments and would apply for a dog license. Rose was persuaded Li was sincere, so she and her friends delivered Niuniu to its new home. But just one week later, Li called again, asking about another dog Rose had just rescued. This aroused Rose's suspicions.

Rose and her friends asked to visit Li to see how Niuniu was getting on. Li refused, offering a variety of excuses. Under pressure from users at the Sina forums, Li finally admitted that she had sold the dog to a man from Hebei Province.

"The woman has been lying all the time, even her name was false. Her real name is Liu Jie, and she has been trading in dogs for a long time on our forum. Many animal lovers have been cheated by her", said an angry Rose.

Liu's photograph and her confession have been posted online. Some dog sellers have joined in the condemnation. Lu Hua, another pet lover, pointed out that people need to be very careful when selecting a new home for a dog, and should spend some time and effort to confirm the validity of interested parties' claims. "They ought to bring in regulations to protect animals in this kind of situation", Rose believes.

Rose is still looking for Niuniu and hoping it has been sold to a good home. She said, "If they use it as a stud, Niuniu will suffer much more. We promise to buy Niuniu back if it is sold to any pet shop or dog dealers. All we wish is to find a home for it."

Keep it in the family

By Guardian Unlimited

George Bush yesterday declared his backing for a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage, writes Bonnie Malkin.

In an uncharacteristically low-key address, Mr Bush told a group of assembled conservatives: "Our policies should aim to strengthen families, not undermine them, and changing the definition of marriage would undermine the family structure."

Critics have called the move everything from 'half-arsed' to 'divisive' and a 'cynical' ploy to divert attention from the war in Iraq.

Mr Bush's announcement has also been described as part of a campaign to win back support from increasingly cynical conservatives and protect the GOP majority in the House and Senate.

But the proposed ban also has vocal supporters. *The Boston Herald* carries an opinion piece supporting the amendment on the basis that "marriage between one man and one woman does a better job protecting children".

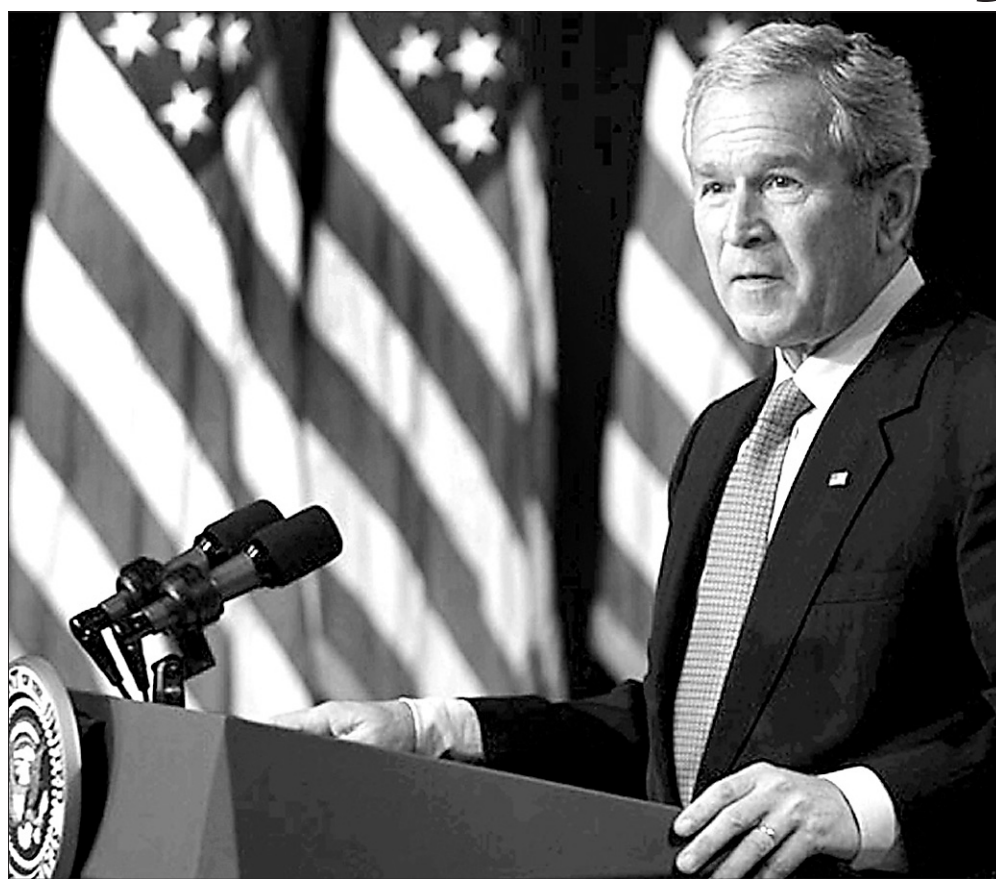
Comments:

Ah yes the land of the free! But same sex marriage, NO! More like the land of the free (if you do what you're told).

— joshin69

Banning gay marriage to protect straight marriage makes as much sense as attacking Iraq because of WMD's and 9/11. In both cases, you're talking about falsified threats and non-existent connections.

But to be fair, what else have Bush and the Republicans got



to run on? The bungled wars in Iraq and Afghanistan? The massive budget and trade deficits? Actually, Bush doesn't care about gay marriage and neither does most of the Republican leadership. Again, it's because Bush and the Republicans are desperate for an issue and are terrified of losing their religious/social conservative base in a critical election year.

It's nothing but a cynical ploy by a bankrupt party leadership desperate to cling to power.

— Whitt

What really rankles is the smug hypocrisy of this Bush idiot. He continually uses 'freedom' as a justification for the so-called war on terror; and yet at the same time he is happy to be prescriptive and restrictive at home, preventing people

from burning the flag or marrying their same-sex partners.

— Spoonface

Why in the USA half of marriages end in divorce is it such a great institution? Not only has marriage failed many children badly, it is now being used hysterically to beat up on gay Americans right to equality.

Shame on the USA.

— rougnz

In the United States, if a politician wants to make some media time, he call for a "Constitutional Amendment". Both their major parties do this.

The Americans have a saying; "It's all Show-Biz".

— LindyHopp

Surely a constitution is there to give rights, not to take them away by institutionalizing discrimination. The right to bear arms, the right to free speech and apparently now the right not to see married gays?

— stevecov

What's the big deal anyway? It's not like if gay marriage becomes legal every man in the United States will find another man (or woman find a woman) to marry!! Or is it? :)

It certainly isn't going to encourage more people to become gay than there already are or will be in the future.

— dv420uk

I love the rationale that allowing gay marriage would be harmful to heterosexual marriages. I always thought most American males were stuck in the closet, this law proves it. "Thank you, Mister President, for forcing me to deny my attraction to other men and thus forcing me to remain in my loveless sham of a marriage!"

— DiagonalArgument

I do not see why the UK term 'civil union' cannot be applied in both the US and Canada. Let it exist as the official euphemism for 'gay marriage' and get on with something important in the world.

— MSmittty

Study: strict parents = fat kids

By Michael Winter

Taking a tough line with your children might actually be bulging their waistlines, a new study concludes. Why? Kids over-eat to cope with the stress of authoritarian parents, according to the study by the Boston University School of Medicine. "Strict mothers were nearly five times more likely to raise tubby first-graders than mothers who treated their children with flexibility and respect while also setting clear rules," *The Associated Press* reports.

Another conclusion: "Although the children of flexible, rule-setting moms mostly avoided obesity, the children of neglectful mothers and permissive mothers were twice as likely to get fat," AP said.

Comments:

Behind every bad and fat kid is a bad, and probably fat parent. Parents need to get real and start taking responsibility for how they are raising their children. There is no one more influential to a young child than their parents.

— Darius

It seems to me that today's world is working against healthy life styles altogether: Children have less supervision as a whole;

Food establishments offer up more "fattening" menus; TV commercials bombard kids and adults with poor dietary products; Physical activities at schools are not funded nearly as much as they used to be.

— mtatom

I grew up with an authoritarian father who regularly slapped and mocked me verbally from an early age. Around 7 or 8 I gained a lot of weight in response to the stress and didn't lose it until the age of 16.

— Nathan T

Its so disgusting and disturbing to see the amount of these poor little fatties running around, when plain discipline and setting limits could solve it.

— J.L.C.

The flexible parent encourages the children in feeding excessively by always allowing them get what they demand and also providing the resources and space in buying JUNK FOODS for themselves but the strict parent will never allow this at an instant.

— Ejibenam Chukwuebuka

We are getting fat cause of the crap we are eating. Take any packaged food out of your cupboard and Google the ingredients.

— Ken

My parents tried to force me

to eat as a child. I slept at the dinner table many nights because I wasn't allowed to get up until I ate. Sometimes I would have a choice to eat or get spanked by the belt. I'd gladly take the belt.

The only thing I could control in my life was what I ate and I wasn't about to let them take that from me.

— food

I can tell you Chinese parents are on average much more strict as the average Latino/White/Black parents. Look how fat Chinese kids are in your school:-)

— no clue

My parents are strict but I don't eat to cope with stress! I eat because I like food.

— frank

They are eating crap!!!! How about implementing a Junk Food Tax??? Start taxing soda by 50 percent and watch this dramatically decrease!!

— Stricter

When i was a kid- not too long ago- kids played outside on bikes, or played ball with the neighbors. Neighborhoods today are largely kid-empty! Why? Kids are inside watching DVDs, playing Nintendo, on the Internet or cell phone eating snacks with hydrogenated oils (fat producers!).

— Nonsense, USA

Weekly topics

Newsweek (US)

1. Terror watch: was Canada's P.M. a target?
2. To win, Dems must forget D.C.
3. Music: remembering Billy Preston
4. Marriage and immigration: Bush's split
5. Are free public Wi-Fi plans mostly hype?

The New York Times (US)

1. Official of UN says Americans undermine it with criticism
2. Details emerge about suspects in Canada bomb plot
3. Senate emphasis on ideology has some in G.O.P. anxious
4. With gay marriage ban, conservatives keep score
5. Uncovering Iraq's horrors in desert graves

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

1. Chess queen triggers 'Gormallygate'
2. Late goals seal Soceroos win

3. Killer of a parking spot – guess the driver
4. We were evil, Google founder admits
5. Cronulla train fight 'just a big misunderstanding'

Toronto Star (Canada)

1. Suspects seem strictly second-rate
2. Canadian pilots battle fatigue
3. Salts of the earth and sea
4. TTC tells Ducharme to leave now
5. Toyota rules vehicle quality rankings

Daily Telegraph (UK)

1. Fears for the worst as 10,000 Spitfires head for Germany
2. Russia leading global 'stealth demand' for gold
3. Terror cell 'was planning nerve gas attack on capital'
4. Hundreds of child slaves sold into UK every year
5. One pill a day keeps cancer at bay

(By Jiang Xubo)



European Authentic Taste

By Chu Meng

Imported Food and Hospitality Expo of China 2006 (FHC) in Beijing was jointly launched this Wednesday by the China Cuisine Association and 16 foreign embassies. It was an opportunity for Chinese restaurants, hotels and companies to source for the latest international products.

During this three-day trade only event, about 150 western companies from 18 countries and regions, including Germany, Greece, Spain, Sri Lanka, and the USA sought domestic agencies to promote their market share. It showcased food and drink from frozen and bakery items to coffee and wine; and retail & hospitality equipment and supplies.

European Authentic Taste

The European Union has the biggest pavilion to promote the 'European Authentic Taste (EAT)' program where traditional and regional items from the EU get a stamp of approval. 'Designation of Quality' labels

Embassies bring international delicacies



Officials from various countries tasting wines

Photos by Jia Zhiyin

guard the names of foods that are made by in defined geographical areas or specific production methods. These labels are the EU's way of offering consumers the best-tasting products Europe has to offer.

Officials from most European Union member countries such as Germany, Austria, Belgium, Spain, French, Greek, Italy and Norway participated in the demonstration feast for the Designation of Quality label. Dishes such as roast beef with

Gorgonzola cream rolls on toast, Parma ham with tomatoes and organic olive oil, and profiteroles filled with cream and chocolate were all created with 'stamped' materials.

Culinary Arts Competition

Apart from the solid products, keep a look out for Beijing Culinary Arts Competition, where 60 western chefs will pit their skills against one another. Apart from the medals, competitors stand a chance to walk away with some great prizes for the

Metro Best Chef Award and the Young Talent Award.

The competitions will include Bread, Three Tier Wedding Cakes, a Buffet Showpiece, Plated Desserts, Fruit & Vegetable Carving, a Western Three Course Menu, and Beef, Salmon, Spring Chicken and Vegetarian Cooking.

Other complementary events held alongside the exhibition included a Bartender Competition by the China Bartender Association and a Ceylon Tea Tasting by the Sri Lanka Tea Board.

International Environment Forum held to fight desertification

By Chen Shasha

The first Students' International Environment Forum (SIEF2006) was held at Beijing University on June 4, with the theme 'Fight against desertification'.

As desertification is impacting China's economy, the forum was held to ask for suggestions from all over the world to help solve the serious environment problem. Professors and students from China, the US, Korea and Japan took part in the two day meeting.

Zhang Xin, one of the organizers from the College of Environmental Sciences (COES) said that more than 100 research papers from specialists and students were collected before the conference. Topics included sand storms in Beijing, Eco-tourism, culture and environmental protection.

"In fact, it is not only the government's responsibility [environment protection]" said Ken Bagstad, student from the University of Vermont. After studying the heavy pollution in Beijing, he thinks it is time to let the whole nation take initiative for a clean environment. "China enjoys a developing economy, but people haven't made much contribution to welfare for environment protection," said Bagstad. However, things must be changed, according to his friend Josh Chin, a student who came from UC Berkeley. During his three days in Beijing, Josh sent questionnaires to hundreds of youngsters to collect their opinions on environment protection. "These people will shape the future of the country, even the world. I value what they think and how they would take action," Josh explained. "The new generation in China pays more attention to the environment."

One week of fieldwork in Alashan in Inner Mongolia follows the forum. Students will do research concerning desertification and local economy in Alashan and send reports to the United Nations.



ATCC

Photo provided by AFOS

AFOS in Beijing

By Annie Wei

The Asia Festival of Speed (AFOS) is ready to excite local racing car fans again this weekend. A group of international drivers have arrived Beijing this week, from Germany, Bahrain, New Zealand, Australia, Macau, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, United Kingdom and Japan.

The Asian Festival of Speed is organized by Motorsport Asia Limited and sanctioned by Federation International Automobile, also the largest and highest level Asian event. The Beijing leg of the race will involve the Asian Touring Car Championship, Formula BMW Asia and Porsche Carrera Cup Asia.

Compared with the other two circuits in China, Beijing Goldenport Motor Park is a bit smaller with only 3.3 kilometers, but it boasts the biggest crowds. According to the organizer, they had to shut the gates last year, as the number of people trying to get in exceeded

circuit's 25,000 capacity. They said around 10,000 people were estimated to be locked out. There was also a five kilometer traffic jam on the main highway leading to the track.

Franz Engstler, from Germany, points leader of ATCC said, "Beijing has always been exciting, the roar of the spectators and the tight corners all provide for an intense weekend full of action."

SCC Racing Team, the first Chinese team that appeared in the international GT competition got a second prize last year. Pei Pei, media manager from SCC Racing Team, in the Porsche Carrera Cup Asia category said, "We believe we will do very well this year and try to get No. 1."

Free practice for all three races will be held on Friday, June 9th. Qualifying sessions for the three races along with round 6 races for the Formula BMW Asia will be held on Saturday, June 10th. Race Day will begin at 10:00 am (Beijing time) on Sunday, June 11th.

Going green to get the blues

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Over 40 local and international companies and enterprises in Beijing have taken up the banner of the Green Commuters plan launched by Environmental Defense (ED), an environment protection NGO based in the US, and the China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO). They chose World Environment Day this Monday to make the announcement.

The Green Commuters encourages staff in companies to reduce the use of private cars or taxis, and take other public transport instead. Companies will set subsidies to reward staff for not driving.

It is not easy for enterprises to introduce such a change to their staff's lives. Many staff who give up driving or share cars find it inconvenient when something urgent happens. "The commitment is not something that can be realized in a day. It takes time to develop individual solutions for different companies. Some companies, such

as British Petroleum, have forwarded us the information of their staff transportation details, such as the number of people and private cars, the routes, and the location of public transport stops and stations around the company. That will help us," said Zhang Ling from ED.

CANGO and ED have both started the plan in their organizations. The staff find partners to share taxis, and try to cycle, take the subway or the bus instead of driving. The organizations will reimburse public transport fares accordingly. Even visitors to ED are offered reimbursement on presentation of their public transport ticket. "We are not against driving, but promote efficiency to save money and protect the air," said Zhang.

Dr Daniel J. Dudek, chief economist of ED, pointed out that Green Commuting was just one part of their campaign to achieve more blue sky days in Beijing.

Water shortages: a serious business

By Annie Wei

Long-term residents have noticed that Beijing has had more rain this year. However, the rainwater doesn't hide the fact that Beijing has a real lack of water. Every summer, authorities warn that the water situation is severe.

People are generally unsure about the severity of the problem and what they, as individuals, can do.

According to Peter Kuests, a German landscape technician for European Landscapes Contractors Association, proper water storage management can provide a solution.

Kuests, who has been working in Beijing for four years had a discussion with environmentally concerned people on water management Wednesday afternoon. Kuests explained how Germany uses the

store water management technology, as cost effective, sustainable and environmental-friendly methods to solved part of the problems. His job is to spread the technology in China.

The discussion was held in China Environment and Sustainable Development Reference and Research Center and 11 people took part. The center said that they would hold similar events with a free library open to all.

Salute to John Cage

By Wang Xiaoyuan

John Cage, the Canadian master of the electronic melody, may have been an inspiration to many. His influence was certainly not lost on Matthew Breckick and Eugene Martynec who performed at Bookworm on Tuesday night in honor of the great man.

The performance was named *Playing in John's Cage*. Breckick, an amateur actor, read out Cage's writings, thoughts and anecdotes accompanied by live computer music courtesy of Canadian musician Martynec.

Breckick retired from the US Army and is now staying in Beijing with his family. He met Martynec about two weeks ago in Beijing International School. "John Cage is our hero", said Breckick. The two fans decided to perform to pay a tribute to Cage. Breckick found 30 pages of Cage's writings and edited the essence into a humorous biography. Martynec did the DJ work, selecting pieces to show how different cultures and factors are combined in Cage's music.

John Cage has influenced the last 50 years of contemporary music. He created more forms to reflect different philosophies like Zen, American Indian culture and environmental sounds in his music.

Is that a Milonga in your Doodoo or are you just pleased to see me?



'Do you do Doodoo?', 'I do do Doodoo.'

Photos by Tian Yufeng

By Wang Xiaoyuan

Tango lovers had a wonderful Milonga – or dancing party – on Wednesday night at Doodoo's at the south gate of Ritan Park. Teachers from the dancing club Beijing Tango showed the regulars the heat and charm of Tango.

At the center of the bar, people started to walk in a circle. More joined later. Michael Schroeder, the teacher from Spain, stood at the center of the circle, beating the rhythm. "It is difficult for beginners to follow the rhythm, so the first thing we do is to help every one to get used to the steps," he said. All the dancers walked very slowly, counting the rhythm and some had started to practice some steps.

As the melody changed, get-

ting louder and more sonorous, dancers soon found partners. Felicia Schwartz, a teacher at Beijing Tango and the organizer of the Milonga, helped each pair to find their center and corrected their posture. "Milonga means a dancing party. Here we are not doing formal courses. Teachers are just leading the dancers to dance as much as they like. It is also a good time to get to know more people, as we are going to change partners in the next round," she said.

Most of the dancers there were beginners. The Milonga lasted till the wee hours. From June 15 to September 15, Beijing Tango will host Canadian tango teacher Richard Sagala to give classes and theme workshops. Tel: 6504 1223

Stop whaling before it's too late

By Wang Xiaoyuan

An anti-whaling video and online voting project were released by International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) this Monday to raise the attention of the public to stop Japan's illegal whaling in the name of scientific research.

"Japan has just announced its whaling targets this year, which is one third more than last year [1,240]. To make things worse, pro-whaling nations are on the verge of taking over the International Whal-

ing Commission (IWC). We don't want to see the commission turn from a protection organization into a whaling club," said He Yong, the of IFAW China office.

There are five days ahead of the annual IWC decision on whether to pass Japan's whaling targets. IFAW cooperated with other international NGOs and released the video titled *Slaughter ≠ Science*. The video can be viewed and download at www.cri.cn, <http://tech.tom.com> and www.ifaw.org/china/stopwhaling. Vis-

itors can vote against whaling online on these websites, too.

Erika Helms, the executive director of the Jane Goodall Institute (China), also attended the meeting and passed a message sent by Dr Goodall that encourages people to join the fight to help protect the magnificent creatures.

Yu Jie, a representative from Greenpeace, made a short speech. "Greenpeace has been against illegal whaling for about 30 years. Thirty years ago, our members

sailed a small boat between an escaping whale and a huge whaling vessel to try to protect the whale; however, today we are still sailing the same boat and doing the same thing. There were about nine million whale watchers in 1991, and the number is going up at the rate of 12 percent each year. We should let their sound be heard by IWC."

She ended, saying: "You can watch a whale hundreds of times; you can only kill it once."



Russian light and music 'spectacular'

By Chen Shasha

More than 100 Russian and Chinese musicians will take to the stage in Haidian Park on Saturday for a massive light and music festival.

Russian Soul will be performed to celebrate the Year of Russia in China and is expected to draw crowds from across the capital.

Russian orchestras and popular soloists will perform classical music as lights and pyrotechnics illuminate the show. The Moscow Symphony Orchestra, one of the best-known orchestras in the world, will perform everything

from old Russian romance pieces like *'Shine, Shine, My Star'* to folk songs like *'Along Pitserskaya'*. The Flowers, a top Russian rock band, will team up with Chinese pop star Zhu Hua.

Eleven-year-old musical maestro, E. Prosolupova, from the Central Children's Music School at Tchaikovsky's Moscow State Conservatory will perform the third act of the *Raimonda* ballet accompanied by young Chinese violinist Yue Guangnan.

It is the first time that the light and music show has come to China since it was first performed

in London 15 years ago. Organizers have forked out over 40 million yuan on setting up the show and decorating the stage.

The Festival of Russian culture is considered one of the most important activities staged as part of the Year of Russia in China. On March 21, President Vladimir Putin and Chairman Hu Jintao signed a contract for the Year of Russia. On July 4, Moscow Theater 'Petr Fomenko's Workshop' will perform *Wolves and Sheep* in Beijing Capital Theater, the final performance for the Year of Russia.



Party in the park

Photo provided by Yan Meijun



Comedy puppet opera Aida

Photo provided by Italian Embassy

Pulling all the right strings

By Chu Meng

Italian puppeteers, 'The Company of Marionettes Carlo Colla and Sons' will perform a sophisticated puppet show this weekend. Comedy opera *Aida* will be performed at the Beijing Children's Theater on Sunday (June 11) and Monday (12).

Though puppet-theater is generally associated with children's entertainment, the latest troupe of performers touring Beijing is promising to change this misconception. Throughout its 300 year history, the Carlo Colla and Sons' has

delighted audiences of all ages throughout their native Italy and the world, using traditional marionettes to perform classic plays and operas.

Marionettes will be manipulated with amazing skill to transform *Aida*, one of Verdi's heaviest and most profound works, into a comic opera. The director changed the ending, making the temple fall down and allowing Radames and Aida to escape to the forest. The result is a moving spectacle, with great rhythm, and rich in comic sketches.

Memory and Oblivion

By Han Manman

Famed French artist Braco Dimitrijevic is hoping to pull in the crowds this week with his latest exhibition, 'Memory and Oblivion'.

The painter teams up with well-known Chinese contemporary artist Huang Yan for the exhibition, which will be held at the China Imperial College until July 7.

Both Braco and Huang Yan work on the theme of memory, one by integrating original masterpieces in his installations, while the other uses the body, more specifically the face, which he paints in the Chinese

tradition.

Born in 1948 in Sarajevo, Braco now lives and works in Paris and New York. He became known internationally in the early 1970s with his work 'Casual Passer-by', in which he presented gigantic photos of portraits in public places. His work has been displayed in a number of world famous museums. Huang Yan, born in Jilin in 1966, works with different mediums including photography and ceramics.

Like many contemporary Chinese artists, Huang incorporates tradition into his work.

Cartoonists tackle ethical conundrums

By Jackie Zhang

Budding artists have been putting pen to paper this week as they battle it out to draw the best 'bioethics' cartoon.

The British Council run cartoon competition, which kicked off on Monday, calls on cartoonists to depict anything from genetically modified food to test-tube babies and cloning.

The competition is one of a series of activities being held by the British Council to mark

the Eighth World Congress on Bioethics to be held in Beijing in August.

Prizewinners will have their work displayed on the British Council's website, on Sina.com and in *Satire & Humor* magazine.

Anyone interested in taking part should go to <http://comic.sina.com.cn>. The deadline for submissions is July 15 and the results will be announced at the end of the next month.

French director comes to Beijing

By Han Manman

Cedric Klapisch, one of the leading young French directors, is in Beijing this weekend for a series of talks and screenings. Audiences will have the chance to meet Cedric in Beijing at the French Cultural Center today (Friday) at 6.30 pm.

Cedric Klapisch is famed for having refreshed the comedy genre and created a new generation of moviegoers. Many of his comedies have been box office hits, breaking records and scooping dozens of awards.

Two of his films will be screened this evening, *The Spanish Inn* and *Russian Dolls*. A retrospective of his movies will also be held at The French Cultural Center throughout June, including four of his movies: *When the cat's away*, *Maybe*, *The Spanish Inn* and *Russian Dolls*.

Address: French Cultural Center, Guangcai International Mansion 18 Gongti Xilu

Lecture on Sino-Japanese economic relationship

By Han Manman

The Japanese Embassy's Economic Counsellor, Mr. Hiroshi Ishikawa, will give a lecture on the economic relationship between China and Japan at 3 pm on Wednesday (June 14). Chinese scholars, reporters and anyone else with an interest in the economic relationship between the two countries can attend.

To book a seat, contact the embassy before Tuesday and bring an identity card on the day.

Address: The first floor of The Multi-Function Hall in Japanese Embassy's news and culture center (Beijing International Club Office Tower).

TEL: 6532-2136/7/8

E-mail:

info@emb-japan.org.cn

France and South Korea through to semi-finals

By Wang Xiaoyuan

The last round of Group A of the Hiboo Cup was held on Saturday (June 3). France battled it out against African team, African Dream, beating them 3-2, while South Korea walloped Mexico 12-1.

The two winning sides will face each other in the semi-final this weekend.

Avoid the lazy summer days



Qualified coach Gary Saunders with his troops

Photo provided by clubfootball.com

By Niall O Murchadha

The day when hordes of children burst forth from school doorways for the summer holidays is rapidly approaching, and parents will have to contend with their bundles of joy exploding with pent-up energy, or worse, pouting in their room, muttering "I'm so bored!"

Getting exercise and learning useful sporting skills is a productive, healthy way of occupying your children's time this summer. (And it's a way of stopping your little darling from bouncing off the walls all day.)

Luckily, China ClubFootball is running a range of football courses all through the summer. With FA/UEFA qualified coaches at the helm, you might even find that your budding footballer will be sagely shaking their heads at dad's reading of

World Cup games.

The courses, which cater for children from 4-18, will be split into two sections. The little 'uns (Grades K to 3) will have a separate range of courses from the older kids. At the Fun Soccer Academy, they will learn basic motor skills, and fun games and activities will help them develop basic skills. Steve Aldred, from Surrey, England, is head of coaching at China ClubFootball.

"At that age, it's all about participation," said Steve. "We can't make it too complicated for the very small children. It's more about moving around and getting involved."

The Junior Soccer Academy introduces basic tactical understanding and the various positions in structured play. Both one-on-one play and small-sided matches helps them to develop

key techniques.

The Youth Soccer Academy caters for Grade 6 and up. "At seven or eight kids start to get competitive," said Steve Aldred. This is the age that kids can appreciate the concept of playing in a professional way, as well as attacking and defending, and the expectations for the various positions.

"A lot of what we do at that age is technical, building a foundation and developing tactical awareness," said Steve.

Like anything in life, what you get from it depends on what you put in. "We have a mixture of abilities," said Steve. "Some kids come once a week, and some come three times a week, so it's clear that the kids who come three times a week will show a lot more improvement."

But what is the motivation

for these potential stars of the future? Many are expats who will be returning home or moving on to another country. "A lot of the children use it to get a firm base of learning before moving on," said Steve.

As for the possibility that a star in the making is out there right now, Steve said, "If they are reasonably good we would be able to recommend them if they decided to try out at a club."

There are two separate one-week intensive courses in June (June 12 - 17; 19 - 24) and one in August (7 - 12), meeting every day from Monday to Saturday.

There is also a four-week course in July (July 3 - 28), which meets every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

For more information, call 6417 0495, or check out the website at www.clubfootball.com.cn.

BBQ and book fair

By Wang Xiaoyuan

The Learning Center of Beijing (LCB) will host an outdoor barbecue and book fair at its Shunyi campus this Sunday.

Cooks from LCB will prepare a mouth-watering barbecue and Wangfujing Foreign Language Bookstore will bring their latest and best children's books in English. Books for children in differ-

ent ages will be available. Most of them are in school course subjects, like math and natural science. Picture books and storybooks are also available. All the books are for sale.

LCB's summer camps program will also be introduced at the barbecue. Teachers from LCB, Jennifer Sachs, Adrian Johnson and Anita Franklyn, will give pre-

sentations and teach the kids educational games.

The event is free, and will run from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at LCB, Gahood Villa Location, Shunyi.

For further details, please visit the website <http://learningcenter.com.cn>, or contact LCB at 84302826 or 13501298445.



Students learning to make Chinese food in last year's camp

Photo provide by AISB

Language learning and fun in the sun

By Chu Meng

English speakers aged 5-12 are invited for fun in the sun at a summer camp held by the Australian International School in Beijing (AISB) in July

Children will be taught by experienced teachers specialized in English as a second language, (ESL) with class sizes of approximately 10 students. Successful international teachers have developed this course specifically for English beginners.

Where: AISB 7 Louzhuang Lu, Chaoyang District, Beijing.

When: July 3 - July 28, 8.30am - 3.15 pm.

Contact: 84394315/16 or Ann Jiang (Korean Speaker) on 13651000340

E-mail: chris.reed@aisb.com.cn admissions@aisb.com.cn

Open house at Eton School

By Chu Meng

Parents are invited to tour an authentic Montessori environment this Saturday (June 10), with a presentation on Montessori education and qualified teachers on hand to answer questions.

The meeting of the Montessori Socratic Society will be held at Eton's Palm Springs Campus (6539 8967) at 6pm.

Participants will discuss the question: "Montessori-science and compassion-mutually exclusive?" Anyone with a minimum of five years experience in the Montessori world who is interested in debating and exploring educational beliefs are welcome to attend.



Jack Coutier, CEO of Martell, Asia

Martell's art of appreciation



Julia Grindell (left), publishing manager British Chamber of Commerce, and Kimberley Cox, a UK Writer

By Annie Wei

Last weekend, the French cognac company Martell held a big party for guests, combined with art from contemporary oil painter Zhang Xiaogang. Zhang's painting made a sales record in a New York auction some months ago and he became one of the hottest Chinese artists.

Every year, Martell salutes inspired artists, who exhibit the values of independence and creativity. This year, 'Martell Artists of the Year' has chosen to honor Zhang Xiaogang, a painter with eyes that stare from the inside; Lin Tianmian, an artist acclaimed for her pursuit of diversity; Wang Gongxin, an independent new media artist; Zhan Wang, an avant-garde sculptor who brings substance and craftsmanship to his creations.



Esmeralde (left), IT consultant and Gina Sim, Associate Creative Director, from Ogilvy One Worldwide



Felix Saleo (left), marketing manager and Olivia, sales-account supervisor of Air Travel magazine



Shi Qianqian (left), artwork investor, Sui Niansheng (middle) and Amy Sun Ma Armoire, fashion designer



Serge Dumont (left), President of Omnicom Group, Asia Pacific and Yang Rong, editor of Art Media magazine



Mariadele Scotto Di Cesare and Pamela Fattorini

I suck at skiing

By Jonathan 'Cao Cao' Kos-Read

It was important to me that I not fall down. I had spent the entire car ride up telling everyone that I used to be a really good skier. I assumed that, sure, I'd be a little rusty but I'd still rocket down the slopes. My wife, her cousin and his wife of course would suck. They'd never skied before, so even if I wasn't very good, they wouldn't know the difference and anyway they'd be worse than me.

When we got out of the ski rental place I was psyched, or had sort of forced myself to be psyched to cover up because I was nervous about sucking. That's the frame of mind I was in when we hit the first obstacle. It was a gentle, three foot, snow covered slope down from the ski rental building to the 'milling around' area where you could get to the lifts. Everybody around me was stopped cold by this yawning chasm. Not me. I plunged right ahead, down and then tried to do that cool skid-turn and stop that I used to be able to do really well. This time though instead of a graceful

turn with a spray of snow, my skis crossed over each other, my feet came out and I flew forward. There is a certain kind of fall where you are at like 45 degrees and can't quite get back upright but continue, for step after flailing step, to not quite fall. Eventually of course you do, as I did, but not before I managed to stagger for about 10 feet, take out some poor, deer-in-the-headlights girl in my path then go ass-up, full-on face in the snow.

"See, you gotta fall or you'll never learn," I said to them, spitting snow out of my mouth. Then I said, "Whoa, not as good as I thought I was. Ha-ha." That didn't really work though because I couldn't pretend anymore to be a "really good but slightly rusty" skier. So I changed my tack to: the unskilled but fearless scrapper, unbowed by failure. I told them I was going to go on the intermediate slope. They laughed at me and said I would die. I called them pussies and took off.

There were maybe around a billion people on the bunny slopes roiling around like pink ants. I

write slopes plural because there were only five slopes total and four of them were bunnies. The fifth one was a terrifying precipice that they labeled 'intermediate' that had maybe like one snowboarder falling down it every five minutes. I headed for that one. Most of the lifts were the kind you stick between your legs and ski up the hill. That was really tiring because I'm in crap shape from sitting around and watching 10 episodes per night of Sopranos, or 24 or Lost or whatever is new on bootleg DVD. It was doubly tiring because most Chinese people haven't skied before so like every fifth person would fall down on the way up and you'd have to slew out and ski around them like a slalom. Even if nobody fell on their own, at some point some out of control bunny slope wildcatter would come plowing into the lift path and cause a pileup that would take down the next 10 people.

I finally made it to the top though. I was so tired just from that, I had to rest for like five minutes. Then I looked down. I thought, Jesus, I made a mis-

take; it was like a damn cliff. The hundred or so people around me were probably thinking the same thing because nobody was skiing, only standing there craning their necks over the side. Finally one guy went for it. He made it about two inches down the slope on his skis then went the rest of the way on his face.

Finally, though, I said, "Fuck it" and went for it. What was the old MTV slogan with all the skateboarders? Something like? Pain is Temporary! Chicks Dig Scars! Glory is Forever. That was me; I was ready for the glory. So I pushed off the edge and went ninety degrees straight down.

All stories should have an element of mystery to them. This can be mine. I got no glory and I got no scars. The mysterious part can be: what did I get? Of course I fell and in a really flamboyant and ridiculous way with my skis flying off into the air and my arms and legs cartwheeling around everywhere. It was so spectacular and ostentatious that my wife, from like a kilometer away, saw it and said, "That's Jonathan."

In bed with Beijing

The world's oldest cinema...and me

By David Drakeford

According to the *Guinness Book of Records*, the longest running cinema in the world is Daguan Lou which has been operating for 100 years – since the very start of the movie industry in China. It is located in the prosperous commercial street called Dazhilan just south of Tiananmen but usually pronounced 'Dashilaer' with the Beijing accent.

Dashilaer is rich in Chinese *laozihao* – long-standing brand names such as Tongrentang pharmacy and *Goubuli baozi*. The aged shop facades and historical wealth attracts large numbers of tourists each year but Wang Zhanyou, the 12th manager of the cinema, does not have the easy job you might imagine.

As in the west, Chinese movie theaters face stiff competition from home cinema but the ultra low-cost DVDs that swamp the streets here make cinema management an all but impossible task. Wang shifts in his seat when I mention piracy, he has no doubts as to the damage it does to ticket sales and, as a state-run enterprise, Daguan Lou has to follow the government's official anti-piracy guidelines. He brightens however when talking about plans to introduce a traditional style of kantou stewards who, taking ushering literally, will stand at the old gate crying out for business in colorful local patois.

Daguan Lou has always been a battlefield between Chinese-made movies and foreign competition, Wang recounts. In

fact China's first ever movie 'Dingjun shan', a 1905 adaptation of the famous Beijing opera was produced by the cinema's original owner as an alternative to imported films. It was a huge success. In 1930 women and men were allowed to sit together marking an important stage in social history and in 1954 it was, like many other privately owned enterprises, taken under state control.

Guiding me around the exhibition hall and film corridor was an amusing and garrulous caretaker. When asked about bad behaviour during screenings, his impersonation of a drunk, shirtless, snoring Beijinger was quite vivid. Surprisingly you can bring your own food and drinks into the cinema but you will be asked to leave



Daguan Lou

Photo by David Drakeford

if you get too *renao*. The small recently renovated hall which showed China's first movie all those years ago is still used for special shows but for now houses a ping pong table. I declined a game.

Recent strategies such as traditional-style renovation combined with the latest digital projectors have improved ticket sales but it's still a long way from the showing of China's first ever movie for which the whole town turned out. It must have been quite a sight.

Beijing Daze

Ideas above their station

By Edmund Backhouse

Seeing a friend off took me out to Beijing West railway station this weekend, the first time I'd visited in at least three years.

I remember the fanfare when the imposing new edifice was built in 1996, and also the sorry tale of the leaks it sprang shortly thereafter, and the subsequent flooding. Recalling this as our cab wound interminably along the complicated approach road, my companion agreed it had been something of a 'doufuzha gongcheng', the dregs left over after making bean curd being the proverbial description of a shoddy construction project, likely using substandard materials, often because corrupt contractors are running some scam.

Grandiose in concept – it is Asia's largest rail terminus – but

ultimately ill thought-out and poorly executed, Beijing West could be a fitting symbol for the city's modernisation drive. Still, despite these inauspicious beginnings, the station is still standing, was expanded in 2000, and is now the main rail hub for Beijing, handling up to 300,000 passengers a day.

I think a significant chunk of these people were attempting to pass through the entrance at the same time as my friend and I. Despite the crush, it was charming to see a wee lad in front of us try to pass his toy racing car through the baggage scanner. I don't think it the car was big enough to conceal any explosives, the illegal transport of which the x-ray machine is there to prevent, so the young fellow was being unnecessarily cautious, if admi-

rably public-spirited.

Be it poorly linked to public transport, over-crowded, and ugly, travelling via Beijing West is still a vast improvement over the latter days of the old Beijing Station. That venerable edifice is still in use of course – the Trans-Siberian leaves from there – but passenger numbers are a fraction of its glory days. I recall, back in the early 90s, early morning scenes reminiscent of some Biblical exodus; the crowds filling the square in the misty half-light, huddled round packs and bundles; the 'floating population' as a formless flood of humanity.

On one visit to book a ticket, a striking figure swam into view from out of this vast ocean. He was at least two and a half metres tall, swarthy and thick-featured, dressed in rags, standing alone

under the eaves by the ticket hall. A curious crowd had gathered to stare, but were keeping a wary distance; he turned a blank gaze to something far away.

When I returned the next day to take my train, the giant was still there, but now dressed in a new suit of clothes and accompanied by someone who acted like his handler. It appeared some enterprising local had fronted the cash to spruce him up, and his head-turning powers had been put use for the benefit of some money-making scheme or other.

So the city takes in its millions, and sends them away again. Some may prosper, many more will not. We are reminded that without the migrants who crowd her stations, Beijing would be a poorer place in so many ways.

Asia Blog Awards 2006-2007

By Olivier Sasportas

The 'network mind' naturally gives birth to initiatives which create new networks. The Asia Blog Awards is the result of such enterprise: a combination of an intelligent altruism – from a core of leading members – and the enthusiastic contribution of those who adopt and therefore crystallize the new body of connexions.

Explicitly dedicated to crowning the best blogs, the ABA's principal objective remains to promote the Asian blogging scene. Attendees should be living in the region, or their blog should be related to it; and all blogs must be predominately written in English – necessary and sufficient conditions to exist in the Translingual Blogosphere.

Launch

This time the competition is based on the Japanese financial year (April 1-March 31). Cut up into four quarterly period contests, the awards will be handed out when the full year results are in.

Nominations for the first period can be submitted until June 16 to this blog – www.asiapundit.com.

There are two main classes: the region/country specific awards – including the best Chinese blog, the best Mekong blog (Vietnam, Laos Myanmar/Burma), the best Indian blog, yadda, yadda, yadda – and the non-region specific awards, with a wide-range of categories, such as the Best Design, the Best Food blog, Best Humor blog or Best Travel blog, ad (not quite) infinitum.

Due to the importance of multimedia tools, which constantly enrich the blogs and play a major role in their success (and are also a way to point out the delicate piracy issues) photos, videos and podcasts have to be original content.

Winners

Winners will be determined by three elements – votes, technorati ranking, and judge's selection. Of course judges will be ineligible, and their names and websites will be publicized. In order to push the anonymous, the most successful bloggers are encouraged to stay out of the competition and be judges. This is one of the charms of the ABA. It is not a sclerotic institution: not yet. What might look like amateurism is the power of creativity.

Last awards

During the last awards 27,200 votes were cast – for the details, look at the previous ABA host's website www.simonworld.mu.nu. This season should reflect the trend that was consecrated blogging through the world. Participation should break records, for the benefit of the Asian blog scene as a whole.

Controlling the employment of foreigners

By Annie Wei

Two 'Thai lady boys' who hit the headlines last week with their raunchy performances at a Beijing tourist resort have been unmasked as fakes.

The pair are in fact neither Thai nor transsexual. They are performance artists from Luoyang in Henan Province who had been hired by the resort, in Mentougou District, to put on a racy show and pull in the punters.

But the episode has done more than simply to infuriate visitors to the resort – it has prompted questions about the employment of foreigners in China.

Beijing's Exit and Entry Bureau claims that any organization in China that hires foreigners illegally will be fined.

In 2005, the bureau fined more than 100 companies that had hired foreigners illegally, including both foreign and local companies. Illegally employed foreign employees can be fined 1,000 yuan and companies up to 50,000 yuan.

You Xiangdong, an officer from the bureau said, "The most common example of illegal employment is foreigners with student visas (the S-visa) working as English teachers." You points out that people on an F-visa (for foreign citizens invited to China on official visits, for surveys, education programs, business, science and technology or cultural exchanges) can work, but only under the agreement of the labor department.

Many people are unaware that having a part-time job in China without the correct visa is also illegal. "If someone is hired by company A and has all the correct paperwork and



It's very difficult to know whether people who are not on the correct visas are teaching and getting paid for it
IC Photo

then works part-time for company B, they are breaking the law," said You. And if you pay an agency or individual to get you a work visa there is a risk that you will be found out and fined, or even deported.

But You admitted it was difficult for the Exit and Entry Bureau to keep track of all illegal employment.

He Derong, who is also an officer at the bureau, gave language tutoring as an example. "It's very difficult to know whether people who are not on the correct visas are tutoring and getting paid for it," he said.

You Xiangdong explained that his department's role was not only to supervise foreign

Tips:
•Anyone caught working illegally in China faces a 1,000 yuan fine. Their employer could be fined up to 50,000 yuan.

•Only J-visa (journalist visa) and Z-visa (work visa) holders can work in China after getting their residents permit. Those on an F-visa (visiting and business visa) are not supposed to undertake any long-term work. Family members of those on a Z-visa will normally be issued an L-visa and are not supposed to do any paid work.

•Foreigners who work in China for the Chinese government, or state-owned companies with licenses to employ foreign experts will have their work visas and residents permits arranged for them.

•Foreign performers with a performing permit approved by the Ministry of Culture do not need to apply for work permits.

companies in Beijing but also to act like immigration control in the US or Europe. "We will tighten controls on the employment of foreigners in Beijing," he said. He explained that China plans to attract more skillful and talented foreign workers while clamping down on immigrants with few skills.

ASK Beijing Today

P. M from the US asked:
What's the going rate for a house cleaner?

A: Expatriates call house cleaners 'Aiyis' in Beijing. 'Ayi' means 'aunt' in Mandarin. The Chinese call house cleaners 'Xiaobaomu' (little baby-sitter), because many families hire very young girls from the countryside to care for their newborn children and their elderly relatives.

In many compounds, there are agencies that supply domestic helpers. But some people prefer to hire an Ayi who has been recommended by a friend or colleague who they know they can trust. At the lower end of the scale, Ayis are paid between six to 15 yuan per hour and may work up to four hours a time. Many foreigners get full-time domestic help as part of their expatriate packages. Full-time ayis are paid upwards of 800 yuan per month.

B.S from Toronto asked, Is there a rock climbing club in Beijing and are there any indoor climbing walls?

A: Rock-climbing was introduced to China in the 1980s. The first national rock-climbing event was held in 1987. Nearly 20 years on and rock-climbing has become increasingly popular, especially among college students.

Where to find an indoor climbing wall:

1 China University of Geosciences in Wudaokou. The wall there is 15 meters high and is mainly used for the training of the university team. They also recruit club members. For more information, call 010-82318655

2 Beijing University
This prestigious university has a climbing team good enough to compete in national competitions. The school is in Haidian District, and any cab driver can take you there. The Wall is 15 meters high and is mainly used for the training of the school team. They also recruit club members.

3 Longtanhu Lake climbing center

Located near Panjiayuan antiques market, on the third east ring road, this climbing center has a wall split into three sections for climbers of different abilities. For more information, call 010 67186358/9031

There are also many opportunities to climb outside Beijing. There are a number of privately organized hiking groups who go on weekend trips from the capital. The training base for China's national climbing team is located in Huairou County. The concrete wall there is 15 meters high and is open to climbers of all abilities. The cost is 700 yuan for two hours, which includes equipment and coaching.

Chris from the UK asked:
I'm sick of having to fork out for overpriced coffees in Starbucks. Is there an alternative?

Yes, there are a lot of small and individual cafes in Beijing, especially in the CBD area and Haidian District. Unfortunately, they are not always as easy to find as those well-positioned Starbucks.

(By Annie Wei)

Outwitting the bike thieves



A four-digit code will outwit the lock pickers and a long metal chord can easily stretch round a railing or lamppost for improvised stop-offs

Photo by David Drakeford

By David Drakeford

For many in Beijing, a bicycle is considered a disposable item, like cheap snack shop chopsticks. After losing several bikes they hit on the strategy of buying a sinfully ugly bone-shaker thus replacing anger and frustration with distinct pity for any thief so desperate as to steal their visually repulsive clanking monstrosity.

There is another way, to stymie the unstoppable force of bike theft one must find an immovable object and chain the bike to it. You might be surprised how quickly the pros can pop open a standard suo so a better option is a combination lock. A four-digit code

will outwit the lock pickers and a long metal chord can easily stretch round a railing or lamppost for improvised stop-offs.

High-end bikes might still be purloined by admirers armed with bolt croppers so for double protection a sturdy 'D' lock with an unpickable circular key can secure the back wheel. At least that will stop them from riding your bike directly to the black market.

Paying three mao for a space at an attended bike park is a good idea but not foolproof unless the guard has eyes in the back of their head. Leaving your bike at a spot and believing it safe just because there

are security guards or onlookers nearby is just plain naive.

Electric bicycles have the added security of an ignition key and registration. After a recent government u-turn, the nifty battery-powered bikes and scooters are a legal option once again, providing you buy an approved brand and register with the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau.

The two locks mentioned above and other high quality accessories and bicycles can be bought at Beixinqiao just west of Guijie restaurant street. Don't forget to ask for brackets (suo jiazi) for your locks, which they can fit for you at no extra cost.

Pursuing a dream

For these disabled people, the stage is where their dreams take flight. Being deaf or physically handicapped has not stopped the music, nor has it stopped these young artists from realizing their dreams.

By Han Manman

My Dream's American and Canadian performance tour has just concluded, and the troupe came back to Beijing on May 24 and got stuck in with rehearsals for their first China show last Saturday.

Entering a small white building near the North Fourth Ring Road, China Disabled People's Performing Art Troupe is in the second floor. The walls of the corridor were posted with the troupe's performance pictures.

The small rehearsal room was filled with people dressed in black dance clothes. They were divided into several groups and rehearsed their programs separately. It was one of those rare moments in life when you witness the deaf and mute dancing gracefully to music they cannot hear, a blind pianist playing a piece to the highest standard, and amputees displaying a challenging and creative dance with body language.

The silent drumbeat

Tai Lihua looks serious and busy circulating from group to group to correct each dancer's movements. As lead dancer and captain of the team, Tai has become a representative of the troupe and her fellow dancers.

The dance *Thousand-handed Bodhisattva* led by Tai, part of the *My Dream* show, is not new to Chinese audiences. The graceful dancing and sumptuous costumes were already a big hit at last year's Spring Festival Gala. The audience was startled by the extraordinary accuracy of the 21 dancers' 'thousand hands' gesticulating as if they belonged to one body. Never has a performance won so much applause.

If you were aware of it, seeing them dancing in perfect unison with the music you would hard imagine that all of these dancers are deaf.

"They could watch and feel the rhythm," said Yang Xiaoling, one of the sign language teachers. She is one of four sign language teachers that stand at the four corners of the stage to show the rhythm to the dancers.

Yang said that the time required between learning a new dance to performance is at least six months for those deaf dancers. "We use drums as music to help them learn the rhythm. They cannot hear the voice, but they can feel the vibrations through the floor. When we beat the drums, they feel the vibration and try to remember the length between each beat," said Yang. "Beside drums, the dancers also lay an ear to the stereo to feel the vibration. Eight hours a day...days per week, they can remember the whole dance but is hard to remember every rhythm, so our sign language works when they forget. They can see our signals to show the rhythm of the music."

Music angel

Besides Tai and her dance team,

My Dream performances also include various other acts, including singing, instrumental solos and Peking Opera.

As the physically disabled Zhang Jiahuan and visually impaired Yang Haitao began to practice their performance duet *Music Angel* from the theme song of *The Phantom of the Opera*, every dancer stopped practicing and sat down on the floor in front of them to 'listen'. The troupe president, Liu Xiaocheng, entered the room quietly and sat down in the crowd.

Jiahuan is a 15-year-old wheelchair-bound girl, who has suffered from spinal muscular atrophy since birth. Yao Haitao stands beside Jiahuan. He has two sparkling eyes but doesn't see. Jiahuan's flowing water like sound together with Haitao's strong baritone and lively timbre produces a very powerful duet.

When the song finished, all the troupe members gave them a hurricane of applause although most of them couldn't hear their song. "Sign language teacher! I need to tell all of you the story of the song," troupe president Liu Xiaocheng said, suddenly standing. "Phantom wants to express something with this song. His face was destroyed. He loves music, creates music and pursues freedom, but no one cares about him, no one wants to sing for him. Then, an 18-year-old girl becomes his sound and his angel..." Liu tells *The Phantom of the Opera* story with energy and emotion. "Jiahuan is the angel, Haitao is a blind boy, in people's eyes, he is ugly but..."

Tai Lihua

After the two hours rehearsal, Tai Lihua finally has ten minutes to herself. When she uses sign language to answer questions with a sign language interpreter, she can also be heard murmuring common spoken language. And a small part of what she says can be understood.

This is the fourth version of *My Dream* in Beijing. Compared with the first version in 1987, lots of programs have changed. In the fourth version, the troupe has begun to create new programs by themselves like the dance *Fairy Butterfly*. "If we call the first version as a baby, then now we have grown up and become an adult," said Tai. She said they depend on their global performance - the troupe not only support themselves, but have also set up a charity foundation to help others.

"Whenever we come to a country to do a performance, people welcome us and whenever we finish a performance, the audiences burst into thunderous applause. The US government has named May 18 the Day of China Disabled People's Performing Art Troupe," said Tai, smiling proudly.

China Disabled People's Performing Art Troupe continues their Dream tour in China



Top: Fairy Butterfly

Bottom left and right: To See the Spring

eam

17

Center stage



From left: Fairy Butterfly by Tai Lihua and Zhao Ligang; Singer Zhang Jiahuan in rehearsal (Photo by Wang Chao); San Cha Kou by Shan Renbing and Lu Yi; and Flower tears by Mao Di.



'My Dream' is a bit of a nightmare

By Edmund Backhouse

My Dream is a 100-minute revue incorporating dance, song, folk and classical music, and Beijing opera. In themselves, none of the dozen or so pieces stood out artistically, except the justly celebrated 'Thousand-arm Avalokiteshvara'. This, which opened the show, sees a line of dancers coordinate closely to effects a visually stunning evocation of the multi-limbed bodhisattva of compassion.

The revue is a production of the China Disabled People's Performing Art Troupe; its unique selling point is that all the performers are physically disabled in some way. Apparently the dream of the title is that disabled people will be more visible and receive greater respect. Having set this laudable goal, the revue not only fails to say anything coherent or relevant in this regard, it ultimately serves to patronize and marginalize the artistes it brings together.

This unfortunate outcome resulted from the overall concept of the show. The focus was on the performers as people with disabilities. Yet nothing in the content and message spoke of the disabled experience in China, rather it was hard to avoid a sense that we were saying 'not bad - considering'.

The problem was compounded by the mawkish introductory links between performances. No heartstring was left untugged in a series of over-wrought speeches making syrupy pleas for love and concern for the differently-abled. The voice spoke on their behalf and defeated its ostensible object by distinguishing between 'us' and 'them'.

Most of the performers were good enough to hold their own in any company, and I would have much preferred to see their talent speak for itself in an 'ordinary' show, or if the focus was on disability, hear or see something from the performers themselves addressing issues of concern in their lives.

Leaving aside the show's flaws as an idea, what of its entertainment value? The various musical performances were all more than competent, with a fine piano recital, and good work from a nine-piece folk ensemble. The one rock number I found fairly silly. The songs I was less taken with. Again, the different singers all had great voices, but none of the songs, either solos or duets, were memorable.

We have mentioned the best of the dance above - the two other ensemble dances suffered because we were invited to be impressed by the mechanics of seeing the blind or limbless dance rather than being offered enjoyment or challenge from the dance itself. A duet was better in this regard; clever use of hidden performers' hands providing a flurry of butterflies as a backdrop to the two lead dancers, who flitted distractingly enough.

The Beijing opera piece was the classic San Cha Kou. Two heroes meet and fight in an inn on a dark night. The skill lies in representing their inability to see each other on a well-lit stage; acrobatic skills create a comic effect as they stalk each other over, under and around a small table. This was well done by the two deaf performers, but was not of the very highest standard.

Perhaps I am being excessively uncharitable. The audience at the special dress rehearsal I attended loved the show, though I suspect it included many family and friends of performers who also had complimentary tickets. But I find I cannot recommend *My Dream* on its artistic merits, and I was offended by its approach to the issue of disability.



Sign language poem *My Dream* by Jiang Xintian

Nice title, but not well developed

By Jane Wang

This is not a show that you can evaluate from an angle of professional choreography. I was moved at the first sight of Thousand-handed Bodhisattva. It definitely has the best theme, costumes, choreography, dancers, music and light effects. Even though I've seen it on TV many times already, the performance still struck me immediately. The dance itself is already a legend.

However, the whole performance has no integrity, though Thousand-handed Bodhisattva was outstanding. There was no connection between programs, in forms or topics. The appearance of a host before each program and the long introduction did nothing for the appreciation and understanding of the show. It would be much better if they just let the show go on without any interruption and got rid of that stupid screen behind the troupe's performance around the world. The title of the show was *My Dream*, which gave the performance a very attractive theme. Unfortunately, the theme was not well developed. Perhaps the show could be better if they can reorganize it by setting different chapters.

Since the audience knew about the situation of the handicapped dancers, there was no need to move them by any form of presentation. In my opinion, it was not fair for the people on stage to remind the audience of their disabilities again and again. People are moved by the beauty and charm of art.

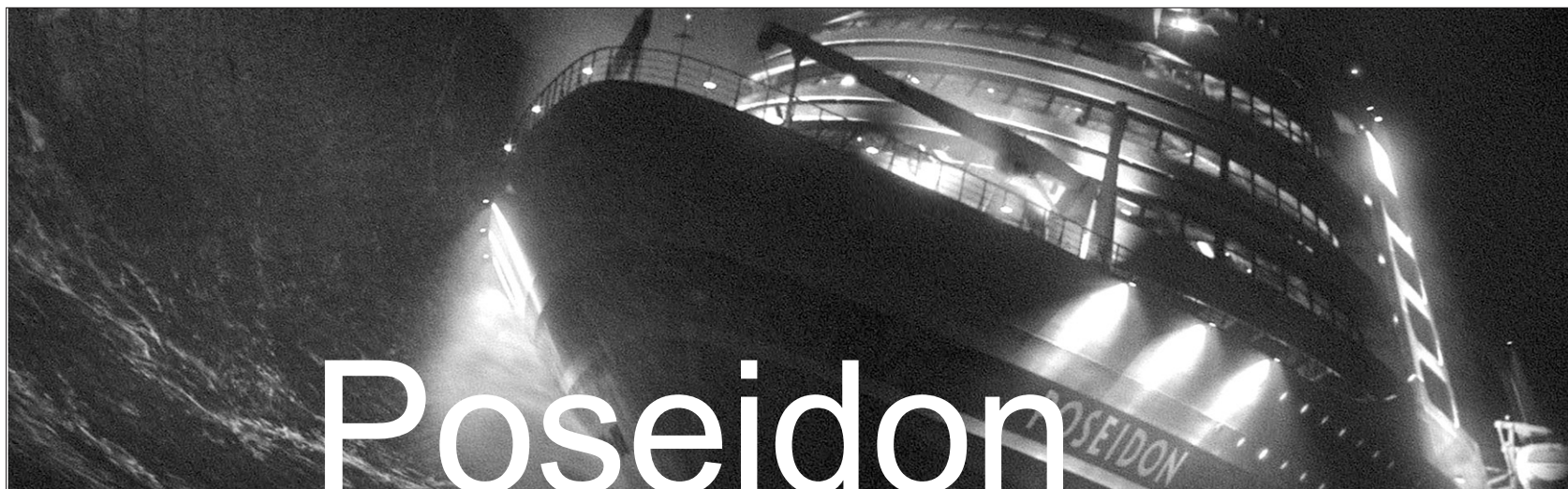
The only thing that lasted through the show was a voice saying that people would be rewarded for their kindness and virtue, no matter how incomplete their bodies are. I must say that the performers on stage are the most pure ones I've ever seen. Their purity made the show transcend the value of art in the days of commercial profit.



Photos by Ye Jin

Editor: Yu Shanshan Designer: Zhao Yan

BEIJING TODAY



Poseidon

A new look at a classic suspense movie

Poseidon sinks, I mean stinks!

Chelledun, a female viewer from Indiana, US

I thought Poseidon would be a big-budget action film with lots of great special effects but kind of a cheesy plot. I did, however, think the film's plot would take advantage of the cruise ship setting. *Titanic* did great things with special effects and the ship setting and it felt very open and exciting.

Poseidon, in contrast, feels very claustrophobic throughout. It feels more like films such as *Red Eye* or *Flight Plan*, despite being set on a massive ocean liner. Only a few shots are given of the ship, and only a couple after it flips over. Most of the action takes place in tiny vents and corridors that are rapidly filling with water. The plot inches forward in a five-step process:

1. They look for a way to climb upwards.
2. One man spots an escape hatch.
3. When their compartment is filling up with water, women begin screaming and generally losing their heads. Silly women!
4. Men use incredible strength and intellectual horsepower to come up with a completely unrealistic last-second solution that propels the group to safety and one step closer to their goal of reaching the top of the ship. Phew!
5. Repeat steps 1-4.

I was generally very unimpressed with the use of CGI in this film. For this type of film, the visual appearance and special effects should at least be very good, even if the plot is a little silly. In the few large group scenes shown in the film, the people in the background and the portions of the ship shown look very fuzzy to me. An opening scene where an actor climbs around on the ships looks like an actor climbing around on blue screens with the ship super-imposed later.

The Poseidon sets off on its journey with the big appeal of the *Titanic*-oriented ocean chill in the sweaty summer in Beijing. After the global success of the blockbuster *Titanic* nine years ago, the movie hopes to stir another blue mania based on the 1972 original and the new millennium's visual effects.

It's New Year's Eve, but cheers and champagne on the Poseidon are suddenly swamped by a tidal wave, which rolls the ship over. Most of the passengers and crew are killed outright, but several hundred remain alive in the ballroom. The only hope of escape is to go through the ship's hull to reach the surface of the water. Some choose to bet on saving themselves by make their way past falling debris, flash fires and the ever-present threat of flooding. Will they make it?



An extremely enjoyable movie

Mad Dog, a female viewer from Hong Kong

For young viewers who might not have seen *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972), they must feel the remake *Poseidon* is nothing special. However, the remake helped me recall the excitement I felt when I watched the original.

The audience cheered and applauded, an unusual reaction to a Hollywood movie in Hong Kong.

Like the original movie, the remake revolves around a group of people who are trying to escape from the ship, but some of the people are not what they seem. The remake does not develop the characters before the accident as well as the original, and they did not have as much of an emotional impact on me. The original spent more time focusing on character development and lead to a greater connection between the characters and the audience.

However, it was my love of the original that lead me to irrationally fall in love with the remake. I guess that is what it means to be a fan.

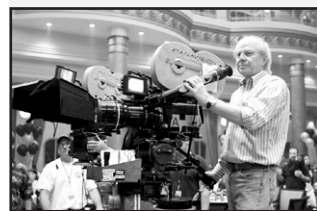
Great graphics, disaster scenes, and a good plot

actionflic

I thought *Poseidon* was a great movie, very entertaining and heart wrenching at moments when you know someone's going to die. I am very into destruction so I try to see every movie about destruction that I can. For example *The Day After Tomorrow*. But the difference is that *The Day After Tomorrow* is a horrible movie with no plot about a bunch of people running around dying in a really fake setting. There is no way possible that this could ever happen.

I read *Poseidon* the book first and thought it was very interesting. The wave was caused by a shift in the ground (earthquake). Although the movie never showed it, it is common sense and is relevant when you think about tsunamis.

The disaster scene where everything flips is one of the best and also pretty gruesome when you look at the dead people after it flips. Also a warning, water + electricity + people = gruesome/not pretty. The movie was a good one and had me sitting on the edge of my seat, or covering my eyes.



Poseidon: turns over, but not in a sewer

Zhou Liming, a movie critic in China

If you are fed up with the love story in *Titanic*, and think that it was an obstacle to special effects, then you can't miss *Poseidon*. The new version of *The Poseidon Adventure* turns to an absolute disaster - not much feeling for the characters.

As for the plot, it develops in the prescribed manner. People who are familiar with Hollywood tricks feel nothing new. According to the rules of no harm coming to women, children, and famous stars, you can predict who will die. Some die to keep other alive, but some are punished by God.

To avoid boredom, I suggest people watch it in a cinema, especially the IMAX. When the perfect audio-visual effects strike you, you will forget about spotting flaws or listening to meaningless words.

God helps those who help themselves

Shelley Xie, freelance writer from Beijing

Before I watched *Poseidon*, I was ready for a romance tragedy that again takes place on a liner to New York, because *Titanic* (1997) left us with a strong emotional impact about the love between Jack and Rose.

However, Wolfgang Petersen, the director who has made his name shooting water disasters, knows his dos and don'ts. He went straight into the action, avoiding elaborate introductions. Some people complain it's short (98 min), but I think he stopped before people would get bored.

When Dylan and his team started the adventure, I thought it would end up looking like *Mission Impossible*. But I was surprised by the thrilling voyage that took my breath away, especially watching it in the UME's IMAX (the first IMAX in China) screen.

The tension comes from wondering what is behind the next door and who will die next. There are young men and women, a child and a senior, the social elite represented by a former New York mayor, right down to the lowly stowaway. They demonstrate the unity of humanity when they help each other to escape death.

Even as the person sitting beside me counted the flaws in certain scenes, I was taken in by the gentlemen's efforts to protect the women and children, and the sacrifice people make for love. I, as a female viewer, care much more about Jack's words "You jump, I jump," than rational thinking about rescue during a ship sinking.

The music keeps the main rhythm to release the sorrow air throughout the movie. The beautiful voice of Stacy Ferguson is successful as the movie music of *Titanic* and *Pearl Harbor*. To be honest, I think it's a good and entertaining thriller/action movie. It confirms a saying that God helps those who help themselves.

What's on

The White Countess (UK/China)

Opening night: June 17, 2006

Set in Shanghai in the late 1930s, the story is about the relationship between a former US diplomat and a refugee Russian countess reduced to a sordid life in the city's bars. Todd Jackson has lost his sight several years earlier, and is now

languishing in Shanghai's grand hotels and elite gentlemen's clubs, a burnt-out case. He has become bitterly disillusioned by the seemingly unavoidable nature of war and conflict. He is deeply affected by the deaths of his wife and children - victims of violent events in the political turmoil of 1930s China that also robbed him of his sight.

The Stranger (China)

Opening night: June 23, 2006

Everyone around us is a stranger to begin with. Zhang Xiuzhen suffered sexual harassment from her ex-boyfriend, and thus has feelings of dread when a strange man approaches her. As a psychotherapist, she has to face different male strangers. A man called Yongping enters her

life, leading to uncertainties, distrust and terror. Who are the strangers that will become her lovers, friends and enemies?

Tsotsi (South Africa/UK)

Opening night: June 29, 2006

A drama tracing six days in the lonely, violent life of Tsotsi (meaning 'thug'), a ruthless, young gang leader. Bolstered by

his small crew of social rejects, Tsotsi refuses to think further ahead than the raids of the coming night. But when an impromptu car jacking results in the accidental kidnapping of an infant, Tsotsi comes to care for the child and begins to gradually rediscover his humanity, dignity, and capacity to love.

(By Shelley Xie)

Cold Skin – sex-slaves, sea monsters and night time massacres



Albert Sanchez Pinol

By Albert Sanchez Pinol

Key issues: violence, solitude and survival

So what's it all about?

Cold Skin is set on a remote island near Antarctica in between the World Wars. The narrator has taken a position as a weather official on the island, and begins his story with his trip to and arrival on this desolate place. He's not entirely alone – there's a lighthouse on the island, and a keeper, Gruner – but it's probably not a good sign that the man who held the weather post for the past year is nowhere to be found. (And Gruner also doesn't look too great on their arrival.)

The isolation of the island is extreme: as Gruner tells the new weather official, it's far off the shipping lanes and they shouldn't expect anyone for a year, until the replacement weather official arrives. The isolation is, however, the least of their problems, as the narrator soon discovers:

I had been meditating on my reasons for coming to this island. I had been seeking peace in nothingness. And in place of silence I have found a monster-plagued inferno.

Oh, yes: every night the monsters come out. Gruner calls them toads, but they're aggressive wild beasts from the sea and every night the humans face a pitched battle against the invaders. They're not all that different from humans, either – despite cold skin and living in the sea. In fact, Gruner has made one his pet cum sex-slave. But the two sides can't get along, and there's a massacre almost each night – and each day a preparation for the night to come

– *The Complete Review*

Aggressive wild beasts, sex-slaves and nighttime massacres... sounds like one for the boys...

"This is an adolescent boys' adventure story, mixing existential angst, sexual fantasy and military action. The resourceful hero digs ditches, fires rifles and uses dynamite against the hordes, described variously as amphibians, fish, reptiles or near-humans. The angst is implicit in the bleakness of the island and, in case we missed it, is underlined by portentous comments"

– Michael Eade, *The Independent*

We all like a hero, especially if he's digging ditches, firing rifles and using dynamite. But against "hordes of near-humans", that's a bit far-fetched isn't it? And what about the small matter of a novel having a plot?

"*Cold Skin* is a superbly controlled and creepy little allegorical novel, set on a strangely verdant outcrop of rock somewhere on the edge of the Antarctic Circle. (...) With a plot pared down to these extreme basics, and no small amount of gore, *Cold Skin* seems to resemble a literary equivalent of the low-budget early horror movies of George Romero and Sam Raimi. But its narrator has a lofty, turn-of-the-century turn of phrase, a distinct philosophical bent."

– Laurence Phelan, *Independent on Sunday*

A horror novel with a "philosophical bent"? Pull the other one...

"Playfully conscious of its B-movie plot, *Cold Skin* avoids the associated pitfalls. The narrator tells his story with detachment as he documents his experiences with the sea fiends. Rather like *Lord of the Flies*, an archetypal plot is an excuse for an extended meditation on man's propensity for violence."

– Tom Williams, *The Observer*

So just how violent and warped does this novel get?

"It's certainly not for everyone, horror never is, especially horror with such an odd sexual element. In this regard, the novel reads like Lovecraft with testosterone. But if weird tales are now and then something to your liking, this novel will run you hot and cold."

– Alan Cheuse, *San Francisco Chronicle*

Ok, so we've established that *Cold Skin* is warped, gory and thought provoking all at the same time. But the author is Spanish – does anything get lost in translation?

"The book is an amazingly quick read; which need be no bad thing. Parts of it reminded me of King's *Bachman* books, in its straightforward set-up and rapid development. There are some clunky moments in the prose, but that may be due to the translation. (...) If you like odd, creepy pulp fiction, you may like *Cold Skin*, or even think there is more to it than that. Either way, it won't take much of your time to find out."

– Andrew McKie, *Sunday Telegraph*

And the novel's far-fetched plot doesn't stop it from being a good read?

"Sanchez Pinol does a lot of the creepy stuff very well, and manages to sustain the suspense almost throughout, despite the unlikelihood of some of what transpires (but then, as the narrator admits: "Our life in the lighthouse is far-fetched.") The book eventually comes fairly nicely full-circle – but it's not entirely neatly resolved.

A dark and unsettling tale, with a bit too many unbelievable elements, *Cold Skin* is a solid read for those who enjoy this sort of creepy story."

– *The Complete Review*

So all-in-all, a good, edge-of-your-seat horror novel. But can we really read anything more into it?

"Sanchez Pinol creates a struggle for survival that is, at the same time, a meditation on humanity. This isn't horror for horrors sake. It approaches some kind of archetype – of isolation, of threat, of melancholy, of the desire for companionship."

– Toby Litt, *The Times*
(By Tom Mackenzie)



Local shelf

Goya

By Robert Hughes

Knopf, 448 pages, 360 yuan

When Jean-Paul Sartre thought about the *Disasters of War*, the *Disparates* and the so-called *Black Paintings* (Pinturas negras) of Goya's later years, he concluded that what Goya was really depicting was the horror of being *Goya*. Hughes, obviously in awe of Goya's works, allows him the court portraits and tapestries that *Goya* endured for money, and makes it a point to examine each painting with fine scrutiny – finding every self portrait of the artist in paintings most other scholars have missed.

Close Reading

By Martin Friedman

Harry N. Abrams, 352 pages

375 yuan

Despite the title, the book is but actually about painting. Chuck Close, one of the most influential and pioneering figurative painters of our time, never believed in inspiration, because "waiting around to be hit on the head by a lightning bolt, you get nothing done... Ideas flow out of the working process, out of what you have already done." Friedman, former director of the Walker Art Center and longtime friend of Close, offers revealing details of the artist's life, including excerpts from personal conversations between the two.

Available: Timezone 8 Art books

Where: Jia 24-2 Meishuguan

Dong Dajie, Dongcheng

Contact: 6400 4427

The Kite Runner



By Khaled Hosseini

Bloomsbury, 324 pages, 90

yuan

The Kite Runner is about an illiterate Afghan boy with an uncanny instinct for predicting exactly where a downed kite will land. The fiction tells the gripping story of a boyhood friendship destroyed by jealousy, fear, and the kind of ruthless evil that transcends mere politics.

Embers

By Sandor Merai

Vintage, 224 pages, 120 yuan

This sensitive, long-considered elaboration of one man's life-long grievance is as gripping as any adventure story and explains why Marai's forgotten 1942 masterpiece is being compared with the work of Thomas Mann. In some ways, Merai's work is more modern than Mann's. His brevity, simplicity, and succinct, unadorned lyricism may call to mind Latin American novelists like Gabriel Garcia Marquez, or even Italo Calvino.

Available: Bookworm

Where: Building 4, Nan Sanlitun Road, Chaoyang

Contact: 6586 9507

(By Wang Xiaoyuan)

Housework – a thing of the past?

Chinese opt for housework free lives

In the 1950s, people spent about eight hours a week doing housework. In the 1990s, that number went down to 2.5 hours. Now, among many white-collar families, the number of hours spent doing housework is closer to zero.

Today, more and more families are paying other people to do their housework for them. Elsa lives in Nanjing, Jiangsu. She has been married for half a year. For her, doing no housework is not a fashion, but a choice under pressure. "I did want to look after our home by myself. But my husband and I have to work from 9 am to 6:30 pm. We buy breakfast outside, and have lunch at our offices. If we want to have dinner together, my husband has to drive from Jiangning for over an hour to pick me up from work so we don't normally get home until after 8 pm. We don't have time to cook so we eat in restaurants a lot of the time," she said.

The couple rarely do any housework. They hire a cleaner for all the chores. Expensive clothes are sent to the laundry. He

Yong, Elsa's husband, is happy with their current life style, "It only costs seven yuan to get five kilograms of clothes washed and ironed," he said. "The cleaner's salary is 80 yuan once a week. If we stick to cheap restaurants, we only spend about 1,200 yuan on food. As our combined monthly income is around 9,000 yuan, we can afford all of that. Being free of chores, we have more time to be together, which is important for our relationship."

The only one who is not happy about Elsa's choice is her mother in law. "She always complains that I'm not a good wife, and that our home is not a home, but a hotel", laughed Elsa.

Wang Yi runs a computer company in Shenyang. He and his wife of one year rarely do any housework. "We don't even go to the supermarket," he said. "We order everything over the phone and they deliver it all to our door. We also order a lot of things over the Internet. My wife and I both concentrate on our jobs. Doing things this way, we have more time for our work."

Housework hazards and how to avoid them

Neck and shoulders: most housework, like washing, cooking and cleaning the floor, requires you to lower your head. Over a long period, this could cause your shoulder and neck muscles to stiffen and ache. If you work in an office and sit in front of computer all day, this kind of housework will only make things worse.

Solution: try to stretch and turn your head in all directions as much as you can, at least once an hour. Use a hot towel on the parts of your body that are stiff.

Back and waist: Heavy loads and a bad posture will cause problems to your back and waist. These can be exacerbated if things like your sink and cooker are positioned at the wrong height for you.

Solution: Use a small stool if you are planning to stand for more than half an hour doing washing or cooking. Take turns to

place your feet on the stool. This will release the pressure on your back and waist. And remember; when you're carrying heavy objects always use your legs to support you, not your waist.

Elbows and wrists: a lot of housework can damage the wrists, especially washing and carrying pots and pans. If you are moving heavy pots and pans, your wrists can get strained or even inflamed.

Solution: Don't carry pots and pans with one hand. Try to use both your arms, instead of your wrists to move and carry them.



According to a recent survey, 60 percent of people who shun housework are aged 45 to 65. Fifty percent of those are educated at least to a high school level and 70 percent are women.

The survey by Nanjing Academy of Social Scientific seems to suggest that Chinese people's appetite for housework is waning.

Men and women are increasingly sharing responsibility for looking after the family home. But some women are of course still dealt a raw deal, having to cook, clean and look after the children after getting back from work as their husbands lounge in front of the TV.

Gasson's philosophy

If you hate the idea of having to pay people to clean your home you can always take a leaf out of Gaelyne Gasson's book. The housewife from Maslin Beach, South Australia, gives her top house cleaning tips below.

Philosophy 1:

It's always going to be there no matter what you do, so you may as well quit surfing the Internet and get it done, eh? Come back when you're finished, if you have any energy to spare.

Philosophy 2:

While there are some things that you just can't let slide, there are other things you can. I've always found it interesting how people can have different priorities when it comes to this philosophy. Anyway, in moderation, this philosophy does have some merit. The dust on your bookcase isn't going to suddenly congeal and turn into a dust monster overnight. If the dishes in the sink are nasty and it bothers you (it should), get them out of your sight by washing them, but don't let the dust bunnies in your life make you miss other more important things like watching the sunset or...browsing the web.

Philosophy 3:

Hide it. If you wander through your home and pick up all the things that are out of place (candy wrappers, the sea shell Aunt Martha sent you that you have no idea what to do with) and put it in a bag, suddenly it doesn't look so bad. Later, you can sort through the bag and put things

in their proper place, but what do you do with the horrible looking sea shell from Aunt Martha? You can't just throw it away, now can you? So hide it. Put it in a box of things to get rid of someday and forget it. Don't go hiding the dirty dishes or trash. It's unhealthy.

Philosophy 4:

Forget about it. There is something to be said for absent-mindedness, but unfortunately I can't remember what it was...

Incidentally, this can be used together with philosophy 3, and is known as "hide it and forget it".

Philosophy 5:

Procrastinate. If you wait long enough someone else might just do it for you! And by the way, this also works well with philosophy 3, which is known as "hide it and get around to sorting it all out. . . later"

Philosophy 6:

If you live with someone else, leave them a note and ask them to do whatever it is you don't want to do (or don't have time to do). The trick to this one is to use it sparingly, as otherwise you'll have a revolt on your hands.

Philosophy 7:

Let it slide until you hear your favorite Aunt Martha is going to visit, then run around and clean like mad. The problem with this philosophy is that if you don't get much company your job will be much harder when you do. And you'll just have to face embarrassment if you have unexpected guests.

By Wang Xiaoyuan





The Ape kingdom

Exclusivity

There is a story of an EMS officer who goes to a post office to send a package containing a pair of sneakers and two t-shirts to Australia. This warm-hearted man told the storeowner that the EMS would cost 400 yuan for delivery.

"Do you think it's worth spending 400 yuan on these?"

"Yes, why not! The expense of the whole package plus the delivery fee is definitely cheaper than the three products the receiver could buy in Australia."

"Cheaper? How much is the shirt?"

"900 yuan."

"What, 900? Why?"

"Yeah, it's the A Bathing Ape."

The man in his thirties seems suddenly stunned, for he could spot little that had elevated the white cotton sweater to such an extreme level of luxury.

While, on the other side of world, post-1980s boys and girls queue outside BAPE shops in New York, London, Tokyo, Taipei or Hong Kong, to fight for a limited-edition shirt. This has made Ape's father, Nigo, a billionaire.

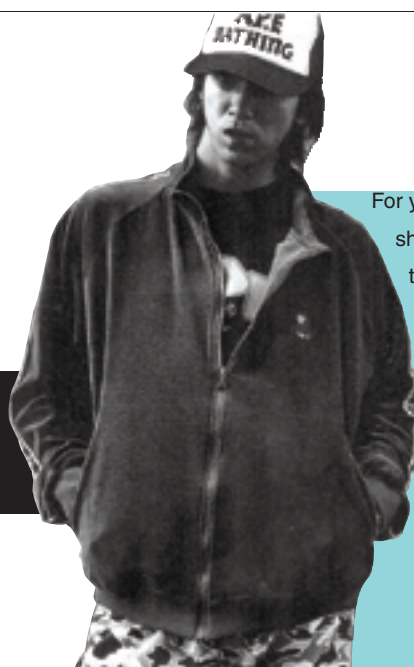
It is said that at the beginning when BAPE was founded, it produced only 50 shirts of one style, of which 30 were for friends and staff, and 20 were sold all over the world.

The sales-assistant of A Yao of SillyWorld in Guangzhou goes crazy for the BAPE he sells (SillyWorld is the shop run by a BAPE fan who frequently flies to Japan to stock up).

"Every time the new collections arrive, they're quickly sold out," he said. "So I seize the opportunity to keep my favorites, even if they cost a lot." He has already collected two pairs of exclusive sneakers within the last six months. As for the brand, he confesses that he really loves the style and bright colors. "After spending 2,000 yuan on a pair of shoes, I certainly want to show off the sharp and dazzling color to others."

Related readings:

Fashiontribes.com: "Limited Edition" Mania



For young snappy dressers in China, the blurry, psychedelic, shag-hair ape face is like an ID. It shows that they belong to a simian world, which includes star members Tadanobu Asano and Sae Isshiki from Japan and Alan Luo, Edison Chen, Ng Yan and Juno Mak from Hong Kong. It is the A Bathing Ape, or BAPE.

Set up in 1993 in Japan, BAPE, the underground brand, has now made its mark from clothes to TV shows, from art galleries to cafes, and from Hong Kong to New York.

By Shelley Xie



Iconic luxury

On April 1, Busy Work Shop, the world's biggest BAPE Store, opened in Hong Kong. It sells clothes, accessories and products from A Bathing Ape, APEE, BAPY and MILO (the latter three are sub-brands). In addition to the screams for Nigo himself, the store was a glittering place for the opening party, with many stars in attendance.

The first BAPE star must be Kimura Takuya, who made the first ad for the brand. When this handsome man drew the eyes and hearts of the youth, no one cared whether it was a shaggy ape on a white Baleno shirt (this shirt cost 30-50 yuan), or a copy of NIKE's Airforce 1.

The popularity of BAPE perfectly reflects the new market featured in those titles: a generation that has emerged in the last 15 years and been influenced not by designer fashion, but instead by the dress codes of their heroes, such hip-hop stars and sportsmen.

The newest one is Hidetoshi Nakata, the Japanese football player who will promote the brand at the World Cup in Germany.

A fashion buyer in the UK gave a lecture at China Fashion Week in Beijing this March, saying that they have already sniffed out the direction of current fashion pioneers in Britain - to promote what Paris Hilton is wearing, a person who promotes her name through doing nothing.

It seems that Nigo's expression "to bathe in lukewarm water" describes the lazy circumstances of today's youth. In a recent interview with *Metropolis*, a Tokyo magazine, he said: "It's a comment on kids in Tokyo today. They're very shallow; they take things for granted, and they're not street savvy. It's sort of ironic for them to be wearing my clothing. I'm trying to show how they are incapable of being independent-minded. They have no plans, no goals, because they're just too comfortable. Like bathing in lukewarm water."

Related readings:

US Secrets of Celebrity Style: A Crash Course in Dressing Like the Stars by Dale Hrabí, Editors of US Weekly (2005)



Crossover

The small gorilla maintains its energetic nature, frequently showing its face outside the walls of the clothing line. It cooperates with Pepsi and Adidas to promote the limited-edition BAPE cola can and APE Super Star, which has become a win-win situation for all concerned.

Last year, the boy ape and a Hello Kitty girl appeared hand-in-hand on the Hello Kitty - BAPE T-Shirts. The romance between the two is lovely. In addition, with this year's remake of *King Kong*, the original inspiration for the BAPE ape, it's ready for new crossover products. So the brand knows how to avoid being dragged down.

BAPE now boasts 25 outlets, including a BAPE Cuts hair salon, BAPE cafe and gallery, boutiques in London, New York, Taipei and Hong Kong. There is also a record label, APE Sounds, which grew out of his collaboration with England's Mo'Wax founder, James Lavelle, and BAPE TV, now broadcasting on Space Shower for two hours on the last Sunday of every month. A Tokyo-based BAPE hotel is on the horizon.

Related readings:

A Bathing Ape:
www.BAPE.com

Rapture: Art's Seduction by Fashion since 1970 to 2002 by Chris Townsend (2002)

Ready to be a night animal for the coming month? The time zone we are in forces us to be awake in the darkness of Beijing, but after a four-year wait, every night will be rewarding.

We love the game and we celebrate this festival. The game leads us to transcend the boundaries of cities and countries, from Hamburg to Munich, Cologne to Berlin, and Germany to China. For people in Beijing, the World Cup is not just reports in newspapers or on TV. We enjoy the football life: the clothes we wear, the shoes we put on, the bags we take, the pillows we sleep on, or the mouse pad we touch every day. We have the World Cup all around us!

Go football crazy this summer



Alarm clock for Italy

A fresh color and a clean sound. When you have this little friend you will not miss any Italian games. No matter if it is late at night or early in the morning, the light button on it will tell you the time.

Price: 30 yuan

Size: 8.5 cm in diameter

Available: shop33370491.taobao.com



Goleo VI

As the official mascot of the 2006 World Cup, Goleo VI is eloquent, quick minded and full of energy. The No. 6 uniform he wears not only indicates he is the sixth mascot in the history of the World Cup, but also the number Franz Beckenbauer wore when he played for Germany. The little lion is a crazy fan that will follow every game held in Germany, accompanied by his favorite friend, Pille, a speaking mini football. Goleo was born in Botswana in July 1985, and moved to Germany when he was very young, where he met with Pille and built a boyhood friendship. After the World Cup, Pille will celebrate his third birthday!

The backpack is a perfect combination of Goleo VI and a real pack. With the heat of the World Cup you will beat any high fashion this summer. No matter where you go, it will make you the focus of everyone's attention.

The manufacturers of Goleo VI: Jim Henson Company, US.

The manufacturers of Pille: Gum Studio, Cologne, Germany

Price: 159 yuan

Available: Sport 100, New Oriental Plaza



World Cup pillow

This is a special pillow for you to lie on when you watch the game. Produced by Offensive 9. The high-quality cotton pillows feature the strips of the different football teams.

Price: 40 yuan each

Available:

shop196817.taobao.com



Beckham model

A must for football fans! You can put it anywhere you like: a study table, computer desk, dining table, or even in a goldfish bowl. Plastic. One of a World Cup series that includes other star players.

Price: 10 yuan

Available: The second floor of Xidan Mingzhu Market



The World Cup coin bank

Want to win your own World Cup after your weekend games? Here it is! The golden World Cup saving box, made of light china, is perfect for football fans! You can use it to award the players, lucky draw winners, or the one who guesses the results of the World Cup.

Size: 28 cm high, 9 cm in diameter (bottom), 16 cm in diameter (ball)

Price: 29 yuan

Available:

shop33227786.taobao.com



Barcelona mouse pad

Eat football, sleep football, drink football! Now it is time to feel the football!

Size: 21 cm in diameter

Price: 10 yuan

Available:

shop33571580.taobao.com

Zidane t-shirt

100% cotton white t-shirt, with your favorite French World Cup hero. Put it on and rush to watch the game!

Price: 39 yuan

Available:

shop33183764.taobao.com



Beckham's No. 7 uniform key holder, England

100 percent rubber, includes top and pants. Feel it each time you open the door to watch the latest game!

Size: 6cmx3cm (the uniform)

Price: 6 yuan

Available: The second floor of Xidan Mingzhu Market; shop33441173.taobao.com



Find similar items in these local shops:

Football World (Qiu Mi Tian Xia), 304, Building 5, Jianwai Soho, No. 4 Jianguomen Wai Da Jie, Chaoyang
Xiao Zhao's Sport Store, B066, B1 Floor, 3,3 Plaza, 33 Sanlitun, Chaoyang
The 12th Football S, 180 Gulou Dong Da Jie, Xicheng
Sport Zone (Dong Gan Bu Luo), 103, Building 5, Cuiwei Lu, Haidian



Your team sandals

Sandals are available for many world cup teams. Rubber soles with flexible bands. The soles are strong and skid resistant. You can't wear them to play a game, of course. However, the freedom and comfort they give you is what you need when watching the game.

Price: 25 yuan per pair

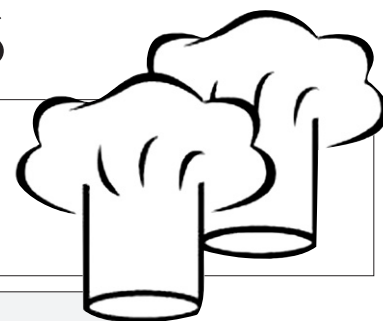
Size: 36 -44 cm available

Available: shop33405533.taobao.com (By Wang Xiaoyuan)

Enjoy the World Cup in Beijing's German restaurants & bars

By Chu Meng

Don't have enough money to fly to Germany to enjoy the World Cup? Are you busily engaged in business, with no time off? Or are you worried about sexy German guys taking away your wife? If so, choose one of the authentic German restaurants or bars in Beijing to get drunk on Munich Darker.



Food

Die Kochmutzen: most authentic decor and youngest one

I've never been to Germany and eaten fresh sausages and locally brewed German beer, but thankfully I have had the chance to eat and drink at Die Kochmutzen. This restaurant has all the charm of a traditional German beerhouse combined with exceptional and authentic food.

The design is as any good pub should be. The tables and chairs are straight from Germany. The atmosphere is warm and inviting, the smell of old timber adds

to the ambiance.

Many of the dishes on the menu are classic German dishes. The green asparagus with smoked salmon (35 yuan) as an appetizer was divine. And the grilled sausage mix (72 yuan) with mashed potatoes and sauerkraut of course, was flavorful and entirely satisfying.

The focus is on beer. You can hold a mug of fresh, unfiltered lager (22 yuan for 300ml) or Hofbrau (25 yuan for 500ml) at the old-fashioned bar, or park your-

self in one of the cozy wooden booths. With free-flowing beer on Friday nights, and a mouth-watering menu, you'll have ample reason to wind your way around the Jianwai Soho Towers.

Upstairs you'll find a delightful, homely dining room where you can feast on Bavarian classics such as bratwurst mix (grilled sausages served with sauerkraut and mashed potatoes, 77 yuan), schweinsbraten (roasted pork with red cabbage and potatoes, RMB 78), or the always-popular

schnitzel (breaded slices of veal served with French fries and a salad, 88 yuan).

With summer here, chef and the owner Hans-Jurgen Voll has planned on introducing patio dining and wheat beer. Their summer terrace is open again!! Outside seating available! Why not pamper yourself with a wide variety of German delicacies in a relaxed and tranquil atmosphere while enjoying classic music performed by their new string quartet!



About the chef Hans-Jurgen Voll: He is a native of Hamburg who has spent the past eight years in China working with German restaurants throughout the country. The chef's personal recommendations are: pork sausage with mashed potato, Nürnberger with sauerkraut, and Vienna Sausage with potato salad



Die Kochmutzen

Where: Ground Floor of Building 7 at Jianwai SOHO (close to China World Trade Centre)
Open: Daily 11.30am-11pm, 300 yuan for 2 people

Patio dining: Every Sunday from 11 am to 3pm, 98 yuan per person, 138 yuan per person including free flow of HB beer.
Tel: 5869 3830

German Restaurants

Kebab Cafe

Where: Across the street from 46 Sanlitun Beijie, Chaoyang
Open: 9 am - 2 am
Tel: 6415 5812

Bauerstube

Where: 3/F, Holiday Inn Lido
Open: 5.30pm - 11.30pm
Tel: 6437 6688 ext.3815

German Restaurant

Where: 3/F, Landmark Hotel, 8 East Third Ring North Road
Open: 11am - midnight
Tel: 6590 6688 ext.5333

Hua-An Butcher Shop

Where: Basement Level 1, SB 126, China World Trade Center
Open: 9am - 8 pm
Tel: 6505 3589

Paulaner Brauhaus: authentic but pricey home-brewed beer

Traditional German food is served up in large portions at this spacious and bright German restaurant of Paulaner Brauhaus in the Kempinski Hotel. Maybe you will have to wash it all down

with delicious Bavarian beer made right in the restaurant, or trying the Maibock served up in genuine German steins.



Paulaner Brauhaus is the only German restaurant in Beijing that has its own premier microbrewery, imported directly from Germany. The whole set procedure is operated under the supervision of their own brew-master from Munich. And all beer is brewed in accordance with one of the oldest German laws, the law of purity, which means it contains only water, yeast, hops and barley malt. The restaurant itself is built around the copper brewing kettles and storage tanks

allowing every guest to experience a true Bavarian pastime.

You can count on the food to be plentiful and delicious. One diners' favorite is the Sampler Platter, which has several different types of meat and sausages on it. This is such a big serving that people always split one in half, and usually still have food left over! The extensive menu features many traditional German favorites such as grilled pork joint, Nurnberger sausage and weisswurst.

Chef Klaus Lukarsch will

offer diners a tantalizing salad bar, a selection of meats and sausages grilled to perfection, tasty BBQ dips and mouth-watering desserts for 145 yuan (subject to 15 percent surcharge). You can enjoy beer, fine food and Beijing's dusk in the garden.

Paulaner Brauhaus

Where: 1/F Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center, Liangmaqiao Road,

Open: 11 am - 1 am, 100-200 yuan per person
Tel: 6465 3388-5732

Schiller's 2: reasonable prices and a rustic atmosphere

Dining at Schiller's 2 is a simple affair. If you are in the mood for a straight-up no-frills lunch or dinner just after work, then look no further.

This is the place for a fried breakfast minus the fear of having to decide which nouvelle cuisine sauce you would like on your eggs. They only serve common homemade German dishes.

Zhao Changchun, the hospitable and sincere Chinese chief chef, has more than ten years' work experience. Before that he received five

years professional training, including three years in Germany. "It is not a good place for a business lunch. But it is a tiny and homely place hiding in the quiet corner along Liangma River. It's like an old and rustic friend, giving you a familiar feeling."

The decor is similar to the food: simple but sufficient. A comfortable German restaurant-bar with an eclectic mix of American knick-knacks adorning the walls, Schiller's 2 is a perfect place to nurse

a groggy noggin. In addition, Schiller's 2 also offers a large selection of German food, including Frankfurter sausages mix, Berlin fried veal with fried apple slices, German grilled pork joint with mashed potatoes, and the ubiquitous hamburger.

Authentic schnitzel aside, Schiller's 2 is also offering possibly the best value-for-money beers. You can enjoy buy-one-get-one-for-free service from 5pm to 8pm every day. Chef said Weizen and Erdinger Darker are the most popular choices. And Weizen

can only be found in the German Embassy and Schiller's 2.

Schiller's 2

Where: 1 Liangmahe South Road, Chaoyang (Opposite to the Jingcheng Plaza)

Open: 9am-12: 30pm, 80 yuan per person, buy-one-get-one-for-free happy beer hour everyday between 5pm and 8pm

Tel: 6464 9016



Longsheng Terrace - a dream on the dragon's backbone



Paddy fields line the mountainside

Photos by Cookie Wu

By Cookie Wu

Back at Guangxi Sanjiang from the southwest part of Guizhou province, I headed to Longsheng to experience the most famous large-scale paddy rice terrace in China. Before this, I blended with the bustling tourists and took a rest at West Street of the tacky Yangshuo after a whole week's traveling in charming Qian and Gui.



Whether young or old, the Red Yao women's hair is black and shiny as silk



A local village house

Dragon's backbone terraces

Dragon's Backbone is a geographic term. The name is from a legend that says it's the backbone of a dragon. The terrace field is 27 kilometers from Longsheng County. The total area of this scenic spot is 66 square kilometers. The total area of the Dragon's Backbone rice terraces is 1,014 hectares, and the whole terrace is built on the hillside at an altitude of 300 to 1,100 meters. The gradient of the terraces are between 26 and 35 degrees. The steepest slope is 50 degrees. Although there are terraces everywhere in the mountain areas of south China, it is extremely rare to see a terrace as big as the dragon ridge terrace. With its breathtakingly beautiful landscapes, the terrace is one of the symbols of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Layers of terraces swirl and climb up from the river valley to the top of the hills where there are a lot of clouds. If you look toward the horizon, you can see blocks of terraces rising from the steep cliffs to the end of the lush trees. Everywhere there is mud, there are cultivated terraces. The core of the terrace is a big area of two or three square kilometers.

All the terraces are finely divided. They literally cover the surrounding mountains from the bottom to the top. Some of the terraces look like great chains, others look like ribbons. They wind from the foot to the top of the hill. The smaller ones are like snails and the bigger ones like towers. There are layer on layer of terraces, high and low. The outline is very smooth. The scale is enormous. It is said that the Dragon's Backbone terrace was first built in the Yuan dynasty and completed in the Qing dynasty as the crystallization of the wisdom and labor of the minority people. I really can't comprehend the amount of effort that went into hand carving and sculpting all these hills. The human offer that meet into them are quite astonishing.

Huangluo – Longhair village

Red Yao is one of the branches of Yao Minority with unique features. The women and girls wear dresses and hand-made costumes in bright red. That's why they are known as the 'Red Yao'.

Red Yao people believe that hair is the essence and energy of humans, and the hair of women is the symbol of life. Red Yao women grow long hair from childhood. They only cut their hair twice in their whole life. And the cut off hair is treasured with that which comes off in the daily comb. Then the Red Yao women coil up their hair with embroidered black turbans on their heads to protect the hair and as a traditional decoration. After they get married and give birth, the coiling is changed. The beautiful long hair will be done up at the forehead to show the change of status. Usually the Red Yao woman's hair is hidden under the turban from strangers but when the traditional red clothing festival comes, they untie the turbans and let the waterfall like black hair cascade in the sunshine to display their unique beauty.

Huangluo, a village nestled in the mountains of the great terrace fields, got the certificate for a world record for the 60 odd long haired Red Yao women and has been crowned the longest haired village in the world. All the Huangluo women grow hair longer than one meter. Hair that is longer than the woman who wears it is not unusual.

Whether young or old, the Red Yao women's hair is black and shiny as silk. Even among the old, white hair is hard to find. The secret is the water they use for washing. They never throw away the water after washing rice, for them it is better than any fancy-dan shampoo product. They use it as a treatment when washing their long hair at the rivers.



A Red Yao woman on the road

Transportation

From Guilin: Take an express bus from the Guilin bus station bound for Longsheng bus terminal (80 km). The ticket is about 15 yuan. The journey takes about two hours. When you arrive in Longsheng bus station, you can catch a smaller bus that costs six yuan. The bus backtracks for about 20 minutes and then it turns into a road that leads to Ping An. Again, you stop at the last stop where the village is.

From Sanjiang: the distance is only 68km from Sanjiang to Longsheng County. But the road is still under construction during the May 1 holiday. It took us four hours to finish the terribly miserable bumpy journey.

Where to stay over

With plenty of family-run guesthouses, there is no need for travelers to stay in the town of Longsheng.

View Place Inn (Lan Yue Ge)

A room with a view of the sunrise located at the highest point in the village. Therefore the view is unbeatable. The price varies from 20 or 50 yuan per bed, depending on the view outside the room / porch with the view / Internet available.

Panorama Hotel: Dazhai's Highest Hotel: Outstanding views of Dazhai Rice Terrace Valley. The exterior and interior is entirely made of wood, giving the place a wonderful atmosphere. 20 yuan per bed and you can stay under your blankets watching the sunrise!

Where to eat

All the family run guest houses provide food on the ground floor.

What to eat

Mushrooms, bamboo shoots, brake leaves and other potherbs are all natural and freshly picked from the mountain. There are also Preserved meat and home raised chickens. The best dish is the fragrant rice cooked in bamboo. They stuff the mixture of famous local paddy rice, little cubes of preserved meat and some pickle into the bamboo body and then bake till the bamboo surface is sooty.

What to buy

The four famous local products: Longji paddy rice, Longji peppery, Longji wine and Longji tea.

The embroidery work of minority women is also a good buy.

Attention: those so-called 'silver' ornaments are largely fake.



By Lucky Zhang

Located in mid-west Netherlands, Gouda is a typical Dutch town with a long history. Ancient buildings, reticular and interlaced canals, busy markets and friendly people – it seems that Gouda is a town with one foot in the past.

Gouda – the town of cheese

Cheese town

While all the Netherlands is famed for its cheese, 60 percent of all Dutch cheese comes from the town of Gouda.

The typical cheese looks like a yellow wheel with a layer of wax wrapping outside marking the flavor.

For tourists, you have to visit Gouda if you come to the Netherlands. You can taste the famous creamy cheese here. Or experience the busy traditional cheese trade market between June and August.

The earliest cheese trade center in Gouda was built in 1668, called *Kaas Waag* (weigh house). At that time, on market day, thousands of farmers would gather together in the center bringing their products to sell. The building becomes a cheese museum. On afternoons from Tuesday to Sunday, tourists can go to the museum to see the whole cheese making process and learn about the history of cheese. Visitors can sample the wares there as well.

The best choice to experience the real trade market is to come to visit Market Square here in Gouda. It is the biggest market square in the Netherlands. Every year between June and August, the annual traditional cheese market is held on Thursdays.

The trading process is according to the traditional style. Although as much a tourist attraction as anything else, it is still fun to watch how things used to be.

On the main square, in front of the city hall, you will find many huge piles of cheese, with attendant farmer trying to sell them. Then there is a negotiation phase in which an offer is made and then almost immediately refused. There is a ritual that involves slapping each others hand while this is happening. The buyer will then leave and come back after a while, then there is a new negotiation and then the buyer agrees the price, but says he wants people to try the cheese first. He then carves a bit out and asks people to try it. If they say it is good, he will buy the lot. When that is done, a horse-driven carriage will come up and the cheese is loaded onto it and it leaves.

Besides cheese, Gouda is famous for its candles and tobacco pipes as well.



Cheese all around



Fancy a nibble?



Kaas waag (weigh house)

St. John's Church

Gouda is not only famous for cheese and candles, but also the St. John's Church (St. Janskerk). It is the main church in Gouda and is world famous for its stained glass windows. It is the longest church in the Netherlands with a length of 123 meters, and dates from the middle ages. The St. John's Church has a breathtaking collection of 16th and 17th century stained glass windows depicting biblical stories and periods from Dutch history. Every single window deserves hours of study. But even without that, one can enjoy strolling around this church and looking at the windows as if they were a cartoon. The church also boasts a very fine pipe organ and played its part in Dutch history.

Open time: From March to early November Monday to Saturday 9 am to 5 pm

From early November to February Monday to Saturday 10 am to 4 pm

Price: 1.70 euro

Tip: From the end of June to the end of August, at 12:30 every Thursday a concert for visitors will be held.



Garden of St. John's Church



A cheese booth

Stedelijk Museum De Moriaan and Adrie Moorings

A special museum mainly displaying tobacco pipes. More than 2,000 pipes are exhibited here.

Adrie Moorings is a small shop selling tobacco pipes and porcelains near the museum.

Entering Adrie Moorings, you will see different tobacco pipes, big or small. They are all hand-made by the masters in the shop. It is the only place people can see how a traditional tobacco pipe is made. It will cost you at least 10 euros for a small pipe.

Visitors can also book courses in the shop to learn how to make a tobacco pipe.

Town Hall

The main activity in Gouda revolves around the Market Square. In the middle of the square stands the Town Hall (Stadhuis) built in 1450 in a Gothic style that is very reminiscent of the flamboyant Gothic style of the Flemish town halls. The Gouda town hall has numerous statues of Burgundian Dukes and Duchesses and lofty step gables sprouting pinnacles. Every hour you can listen to the city hall's chimes and watch the puppet show depicting the moment that city rights were given to Gouda back in 1272 by Floris V.



The Town Hall

Photos provided by viraltourist.com

Candles

Since the 15th century, Gouda has been famous for its candles. De Vergulde Kaars is the most famous candle shop in Gouda, selling different types of candles: from simple straight ones, to those shaped like people or animals. Some of the candles will emanate fragrance while burning. A pack of two candles will cost you less than 10 euros.

Tourists can book candle making courses in the store. Tourists can make candles with 65 degrees centigrade wax oil and dye the candles whatever colors they like. The candles will be finished in about 45 minutes and you can bring them back to show to your family and friends.

The store opens from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm from Tuesday to Friday, and on Saturday 9:30 am to 4:00 pm.

Women beware

Alcohol affects women differently from men. Women become more impaired than men do after drinking the same amount of alcohol, even when differences in body weight are taken into account. This is because women's bodies have less water than men's bodies. Because alcohol mixes with body water, a given amount of alcohol becomes more highly concentrated in a woman's body than in a man's. In other words, it would be like dropping the same amount of alcohol into a much smaller pail of water. That is why the recommended drinking limit for women is lower than for men.

In addition, chronic alcohol abuse takes a heavier physical toll on women than on men. Alcohol dependence and related medical problems, such as brain, heart, and liver damage, progress more rapidly in women than in men.

Women beware

Drink sensibly

Be aware that you should pick your poison wisely. Since alcohol is exempt from most labeling requirements, it may contain additives that can trigger asthma, migraines, and other reactions. Whenever possible, choose quality brands. The extra money you pour out for a premium cocktail may tax your wallet, but your liver will thank you.

Some distilled beverages are rich in substances called congeners: toxic impurities that can greatly add to your woes. Bourbon, rum, and cognac are particularly 'dirty'. Champagne and some sweet wines are also notorious causes of hangovers. Vodka, being just pure alcohol and water, is the cleanest. It's always a good idea to pace yourself, and to eat if you have more than a drink or two.

Interestingly, doctors say that the ideal drink of choice is sake, the Japanese rice wine, which seems pretty clean to me. People do not get a hangover from it, even when they drink more than normal.

Drink sensibly

Hangovers handled



The World Cup is here. It gives people a great opportunity to get really drunk with friends and football fans in pubs, night after night. But there's a difference between high spirits and full-blown alcoholism.

Have you ever got out of bed to find yourself with a skullsplitting reminder of the night before? Is there anything that can help cure the common hangover?

Symptoms of alcohol abuse

Do You have a drinking problem?

Treatment

Treatments

Alcohol is a strong toxin to both the liver and the nervous system, and it irritates the upper digestive tract and urinary system as well. The morning after a binge, you also feel the effects of dehydration. It certainly seems that everyone has a cure for a hangover: Sailors claim saltwater is the antidote; the Egyptians ate boiled cabbage as a preventive; today, many folks claim it's the 'hair of the dog' that'll stop the hammering. Believe what you will.

I probably don't need to say that moderation is the best way to avoid hangovers. It makes sense to imbibe as much water as possible while you're drinking alcohol, to avoid dehydration. Taking aspirin before drinking, though popular, doesn't help. The best and only sure-fire remedy is time: As your body metabolizes the toxic overdose, symptoms subside. If you have access to pure oxygen in a canister you can try inhaling some to see if it speeds recovery, but this is not practical for most people. So doctors recommend taking a B-complex vitamin supplement.

Symptoms of alcohol abuse

People who abuse alcohol can identify if they have a drinking problem if they have:

*Considered reducing the amount of alcohol consumed

*Become annoyed by criticism of drinking behavior

*Experienced guilt about drinking behavior

*A drink first thing in the morning (as an 'eye opener') in order to get rid of a hangover or to steady their nerves.

One 'yes' answer suggests a possible alcohol problem. A 'yes' to more than one question indicates that it is highly likely a problem exists. In either case, it is important to consult a doctor or other health care provider right away to discuss these responses. He or she can help you determine if they have a drinking problem and, if so, recommend the best course of action.

Do You have a drinking problem?

While you may see yourself as a social drinker, friends and relatives have hinted that your alcohol consumption is excessive.

Find out if you could have a drinking problem by asking yourself these questions, courtesy of the University of Washington:

Do I drink alone when I feel angry or sad?

Does drinking ever make me late for work?

Does drinking worry my family?

Do I ever drink after telling myself I will not?

Do I ever forget what I did while I was drinking?

Do I get headaches or have a hangover after I've been drinking?

If you've answered yes to any of these questions, you should consider getting help for your drinking behavior.

Definition

Alcoholism or alcohol dependence is a chronic disease, characterized by the consumption of alcohol beverages at a level that interferes with physical and mental health and with family and social responsibilities. An alcoholic will continue to drink despite serious health, family or legal problems. Alcoholism is the most severe form of alcohol abuse. The risk for developing alcoholism is influenced both by a person's genes and by his or her lifestyle.

Alcohol abuse differs from alcoholism in that it does not include an extremely strong craving for alcohol, loss of control over drinking, or physical dependence. Alcohol abuse is defined as a pattern of drinking that results in one or more of the following situations within a 12-month period:

*Failure to fulfill major work, school, or home responsibilities

*Drinking in situations that are physically dangerous, such as while driving a car or operating machinery

*Having recurring alcohol-related legal problems, such as being arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or for physically hurting someone while drunk

*Continued drinking despite having ongoing relationship problems that are caused or worsened by the drinking

(By Chu Meng)

Stage in July

Drama – Wolves and the Sheep



Who: Studio of Pyotr Fomenko
When: July 4–5
Where: Capital Theatre, No. 22 Wangfujing Road, Dongcheng
Admission: 80–500 yuan

Great Symphony Orchestra Chorus Concert

Who: National Ballet of China Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Oratorio Society
When: 7:30pm, July 15
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhua Jie, Xicheng
Admission: 60–480 yuan

The Happy Lesson of Piano – Famous Piano Works of the World

Who: Piano Faculty Adviser – Takahashi Masae
When: 7:30pm, July 21
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhua Jie, Xicheng
Admission: 20–100 yuan

The Red Opera

Six classical red operas including Sister Jiang, The White-haired Girl, Liu Hulan.
When: July 1
Where: Great Hall of the People
Admission: 120–600 yuan

Opera – Good Bye My Lover

Who: The Chinese East Song and Dance Troupe
When: July 1–2
Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng
Admission: 85–885 yuan

The Nutcracker puppet show

Who: China Puppet Art Troupe
When: July 1–16
Where: China Puppet Theater, Anhuaxili, Chaoyang
Admission: 30–240 yuan

Drama – I Can't Decide Now

Who: Beijing People's Art Troupe
When: July 7–31
Where: Beijing People's Art Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng
Admission: 60–280 yuan

Concert – Voice of an Angel

Who: Canadian Columbia Child's Voice Choir
When: July 15–16
Where: Poly Theatre, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng
Admission: 50–480 yuan

Army Songs

Who: Army singers including; Nie Jianhua, Dong Yong, Cheng Zhi and Pan Shuzhen.
When: July 31
Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhua Jie, Xicheng
Admission: 80–680 yuan

Friday June 9

Exhibition The State of Hutongs



A Modern Oil Painting Exhibition of the Works of Liu Wanmin
Where: Qin Gallery, Hua Wei Li 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City), Chaoyang
When: 9:30am–7pm, until June 15
Admission: Free
Tel: 8779 0461

Movie

Letter From An Unknown Woman

A man with a long list of lovers receives a letter from a woman he's forgotten and who has since committed suicide. Her message prompts him to recall their short and intense relationship.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies, Inside Kent Center, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Anjialou, Chaoyang
When: until June 10
Admission: 30–50 yuan
Tel: 13901134745

Music

No Opinion



The first stop for No Opinion on their China tour. Hailing from Germany, this lot plays undemanding, melodic punk.

Where: 13 Club, 161 Lanqiying Lu, Chaoyang
When: 9pm
Admission: 30 yuan
Tel: 8262 8077

Jams

Made In Ningxia Night with Buyi, The Scar, and Nucleus



Ningxia shows off its many colors with these three very different local bands - Folk Rock, Ska and Grunge
Where: 2 Kologas, 21 Liangmaqiao Lu, Inside the Maple Drive-in (*Qiche Diangyingyuan*), Chaoyang
When: 9pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8196 4820

Saturday June 10

Exhibition Philosophical Ponderings – Wu Zuguang's Modern Sculptural Works



Where: Qin Gallery, Hua Wei Li 1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City), Chaoyang
When: 9:30am–7pm, till June 30
Admission: Free
Tel: 8779 0461

Music

Four Reggae DJ's

Where: 2 Kologas, 21 Liangmaqiao Lu, Inside the Maple Drive-in (*Qiche Diangyingyuan*), Chaoyang
When: 9pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8196 4820

Movie

The Vagabond



Early Chaplin short, in which the Tramp heads for the country and gets mixed up with a crew of villainous gypsies.

Where: Handsome Café, Building 7, Sanlitun Bei Lu, Chaoyang
When: 9pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6417 8288

Chacun Cherche Son Chat

Chloe goes on holiday and leaves her cat with her neighbor, but the cat runs away and Chloe starts searching her local neighborhood for it.

Where: French Cultural Center, 18 Guangcai International Apartments, West Road of Workers' Stadium, Chaoyang

When: 6pm
Admission: 10–20 yuan
Tel: 6553 2627

Sunday June 11

Exhibition Youth Notes – Liu Jin's Solo Exhibition



Where: F2 Gallery, No. 319 Cao Chang Di, Chaoyang
When: until June 27
Admission: Free
Tel: 6432 8831

East Meets West – The Extractive Watercolor Exhibition



Where: Soka Art Center, Room B-101, Sky & Sea Business Plaza, No.107 Dongsì Beida Street Dongcheng
When: until June 30
Admission: Free
Tel: 8401 2377

Movie

Peut-être



Duris and Peilhas are at loggerheads: she wants a child, he doesn't. During a Millennium eve party, he climbs through a skylight and finds himself in 2070, in a climate-changed Paris under 20 feet of sand.

Where: French Cultural Centre, 18 Guangcai International Apartments, West Road of Workers' Stadium, Chaoyang

When: 6pm
Admission: 10–20 yuan
Tel: 6553 2627

Service

Summer Seafood Specials

Chef Ando Takashi's summer specials embrace distinctive, tasty seafood dishes such as grilled eel and mashed potatoes and grilled dry Ayu fish with deep-fried lotus with shrimp filling.

Where: Nishimura, Shangri-La Hotel, 29 Zizhuyuan Road, Haidian
When: until June 30
Tel: 6841 2211 ext. 2719

(By Qiu Jiaoning)

12% off

Hardware store



Easyhome hardware store (Juran Zhijia, 65 Beisihuan Donglu, Chaoyang) sells everything for the home from DIY materials to furniture. A discount of 12 percent is offered on all bills over 100 yuan. For details, call 8463 4443

49%-89% off

Wedding photography

Massive discounts this weekend at the Taipei-Paris wedding photography studio (Xidan

Beidajie, Xicheng) from 59% off (after 10:39 am) to 89% off (8:39 am-10:39 am).



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(By Terence Lu)



By Han Manman

Assessment center (AC) is a method that is becoming increasingly popular with top fortune 500 companies for selecting qualified staff. Normally, an AC interview is carried out with eight to 10 candidates who are sometimes split into two teams. The assessment includes self-introduction; a speech in English to demonstrate the candidate's logic and English ability; a case study; stress interview and role-play. An AC helps prospective employers conduct job analyses and competency modeling to identify the appropriate dimensions to be assessed.

At last Saturday's competition, 80 students selected from 3,000 candidates, were divided into eight teams, all of which were interviewed using the AC technique. The person in the team with the highest score got into the final. Those who came second in their team had to take part in another test. The first two winners of that contest, together with the eight-team winners, to compete to win an internship with a fortune 500 company.

How to survive in an AC interview



Team A

Time: Saturday morning

Place: University of International Business and Economics

Interviewer: Mr. Zuo and Ms. Du, both of whom worked for well-know Fortune 500 companies.

Comments from Zuo and Du:

Wei Shuai is very expressive and has good public speaking skills, which attracts the attention of the interviewer and audience. The highest mark he got was in story telling. His story was creative and attractive; his performance was good as was his timing.

Wei Shuai has the same problem that Song Mingming has. When they felt that they were not doing so well at something, for example, if they thought they had got something wrong, it would quickly show on their faces or through their body language. For example, they would cover their mouth with their hand or immediately say no if they got something wrong. Things will be a lot tougher in the stress interview. This kind of nervous reaction may have an impact on their final mark.



Winner: Wei Shuai, a third year college student who majored in Chinese as a Foreign Language from Beijing Foreign Studies University

To be honest, I never thought that I would get into the final competition so smoothly. If they chose winners only on their strengths or academic backgrounds, I would not have been the best. I won because I am good at expressing myself. I was very satisfied with the way I performed in the story telling and presentation. I think my stage experience of singing, doing comedy dialogues, and directing shows gave me a lot of confidence.

During the AC interview I was most satisfied with my English story telling. I am confident of my spoken English. I think my story was very fresh. I was given three phrases, 'The White House', '1/3' and 'Spring Festival' and was told to use them to tell a story. I told a story about the Spring Festival being celebrated in one-third of the world's countries and put together a dialogue style story about George W. Bush and one of his officials. I liked my story – it illustrated my national pride.

Preparation was important for my success. In most AC interviews, a self-introduction and a test of your English ability is a must.

Comments from Zuo and Du:

Song Mingming has a good sense of expression and is very focused. She got the highest marks in the five sections of the English self-introduction section. Her answers were well thought out and structured.

She conducted herself in a mature and calm manner, which influenced her team members and helped her become the team leader.

One of her teammates said he had chosen Song because of her good command of English and organizational skills. During the case study she constantly reminded the team about how much time they had left. This stopped the team wasting time and got them to focus on what they had to do.



Revival contest player: Song Mingming, a fourth year college student who majored in English from the Beijing Foreign Studies University. Her teammates voted for her to take part in the revival contest.

I don't know why my teammates voted for me. The way I acted during my AC was not different from the way I act on campus. Maybe I am sincere and genuine. I don't have as much enthusiasm and such a strong desire to win as my partners. I don't view my partners as competitors, I just want to communicate with them, and learn from them.

During the case study discussion, some of my team members looked competitive and aggressive, and tried anything to impress the interviewer. I just worked with the team like they were my friends. I think this helped them gain confidence and trust in me.

In the question section, I was asked a very difficult question – if I had to get rid of one of my team members, who would it be. I couldn't avoid the question, so I pointed at one of my rival teammates. But I was satisfied with the course of action I took. I apologized to my rival teammate.

Photos by Han Manman

Team B

Time: Saturday afternoon

Place: Beijing Forest University

Interviewer: both Mr. Roc and Ms. Wu worked for well-know Fortune 500 companies.

Comments from Mr. Roc and Ms. Wu:

Compared with other participants, Liu Haikun has many weaknesses. But mentally he is much stronger than the others. His psychology background helps him view and do everything very objectively and quietly. He does things very smoothly. He answered the questions well and presented a good case study. But he needs to be more aggressive and competitive if he is to succeed in his future career.



Winner: Liu Haikun, a third year college student majored in International Economics and Trade from the China Agricultural University.

I joined the super intern competition for the experience and to learn from others. I was shocked to be named the winner. Lots of participants were as good as me. Maybe the interviewer chose me because I'm not overly competitive. In my spare time, I have dipped into psychology. I give psychological training on campus, so I know how to deal with the stress of an interview. I wasn't as stressed as the other participants. During my self-introduction, I used a trick that I usually do in the psychology training to help interact with the audience. I think they were impressed with the way I presented myself. I was happy with my stress interview; I was very calm and was able to look at things objectively.

Comments from Mr. Roc and Ms. Wu:

Fang Lu is the most modest member of the team. He is good at self-criticism, which is a very important element of being a good employee. He is a potential leader, because he knows how to take an opportunity and capitalize on it. In the case study, when his teammates made some mistakes, he assumed responsibility and took the blame for them. In most companies, people who get to the top are not usually the best employees in the company, but the ones who profit from experience and do their best to finish tasks. No matter how excellent or intelligent someone is, if they become arrogant and conceited, they will never succeed.

However, Fang Lu is not very flexible and does everything by the rules. He found it difficult adjusting his answers to his competitor's questions. He took too long to react when faced with tough questions.



Revival contest player: Fang Lu, first year postgraduate majored in Economics from Renmin University of China

I tried hard to prepare before the interview, English self-introduction and case study. In our team's case study, we needed to repackage a failing coffee shop on campus. I suggested using a 4P model (Price, Promotion, Product and Place) to analyze the case. This AC imitated a real fortune 500-company interview; I learned a lot from it, especially the case study part. I knew how to communicate well with my teammates and I knew that I had to prepare for the case study and interview. I think my teammates chose me as team leader for the case study because I was more proactive on the case analysis. But I wasn't that happy with my performance. If I was given the chance again, I would pay more attention to how I allocated time and people's tasks.

Study in Britain

By Chen Shasha

Chinese students who choose to do postgraduate studies in Britain will be allowed to work in the country for 12 months after completing their course under a new scheme developed by the UK's Ministry of Education.

The one-year working allowance is just one part of the UK's plan to entice more Chinese students to its shores. "We have a target of attracting 100,000 overseas students and by far the largest number of overseas students will come from China," said Bill Rammell, the minister for higher education, on a recent visit to Beijing.

As the home of the English language and some of the world's oldest and best universities, Britain attracts students from all over the world. Degree courses in Britain tend to be short and intensive; they can therefore work out cheaper than courses in the US or other English speaking countries. British degrees can take just three years and a postgraduate master's only one year, compared with four years and two years in most other countries.

Here, Du Yanhua, vice-manager of UKEAS (United Kingdom Education Advisory Service), tells us about studying in the UK.

Q: How many Chinese students are there in Britain now?

A: Between 17,000 and 26,000 Chinese students go to the UK to study every year. There are currently around 60,000 Chinese students in the UK, 53,000 of whom are in higher education. Chinese students make up about 15 percent of the total number of foreign students in the UK (including those who come from European and non-European countries).

Q: What makes British education different from education in other countries?

A: The UK is renowned for its high quality education, wide range of courses, and hospitality towards foreign students. As a country with a rich multi-cultural background, the UK is open and hospita-

ble. Many Chinese students welcome the all-around services for foreign students that the British system offers. The service normally starts before the students have even left their country. The UK's master degree program is very practical and is closely linked with local industry. The one-year masters course can save the students money and time.

The UK is also at the heart of Western Europe, a convenient base for students who want to travel around other European countries like France, Italy, Germany, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Turkey and Greece. Most of these countries are less than five hours by plane from the UK.

Q: Are there any new scholarships on offer to Chinese students this year? What is the application process?

A: A lot of UK universities have launched new scholarships this year. Unlike in other countries, UK university scholarships are usually allocated after the student is offered a place at the university. Therefore, the first step is to get an offer and then to apply for a scholarship.

UK universities are encouraging academic research, people who apply for a PhD program are more likely to get a scholarship than those applying for a masters.

New scholarships this year include:

Napier University International Scholarship - £1,000 scholarships are available to students on full-time degree program; The University of East London - New Scholarships for International Students valued from £750 to £2,000; The Graduate School at Oxford Brookes University - John Henry Brookes International Scholarships range from £1,000 to £3,200; Full scholarship scheme at Bournemouth University; London Metropolitan University - a joint scholarship program to support students from Asia who wish to study MA International Relations, MA International Public Administration or MA Security Studies; Nottingham Trent University - £1,250 a year to study a full-time undergraduate degree.

As for how to apply, firstly,

students must obtain an unconditional offer to study in a certain university. Candidates should complete a scholarship application form and send it to the university before the deadline. Usually it is around end of May every year. Students should note that faxed or emailed scholarship application forms are not accepted.

Scholarship applications will be reviewed by a panel of academic staff at the university, and are judged in terms of academic excellence and also the extent to which the applicant's study will enhance the economic and social development of their home country. Evidence of voluntary work done should be included in the scholarship application, where applicable.

Q: What are the strongest faculties in the UK?

A: The UK is ahead in developing new technology and the country has the second largest number of Nobel Prize winners in the world. There is a strong, forward-thinking ethos surrounding the sciences and technology and the UK government is pushing for greater development in the areas of science and technology for the future. In the 21st century, the key areas of development included E-business, genome studies, environmental science, information storage, basic science, technology and practical science.

Q: What are the easiest faculties to get scholarships for?

A: Universities in UK are providing more and more scholarships to attract international students. Most universities provide special scholarships to international students. Some are for any disciplines, like UEA, the University of Dundee, the University of Liverpool and the University of Loughborough. Others are mainly in the most popular subjects, such as Business, Law, Sociology and Engineering, which cover nearly 70 percent of the subjects that Chinese students apply for. That means almost every student will have the chance to apply for a scholarship at the university of his or her choice.

Q: Is there any financial support available for high school students from

abroad? Are their parents allowed to accompany them?

A: An increasing number of students are opting to go to independent boarding schools in the UK, which can give students the best pastoral care. Most good boarding schools have scholarships for students who have special talents, such as music, sports and arts. But parents will still be expected to provide financial support regardless of whether or not their child wins a scholarship. Parents can apply for a visitor's visa, but we do not suggest parents stay for too long because it is not necessary. All boarding schools are closely managed and students won't be allowed to live out of their campus residence.

Q: What are the advantages of studying Business Studies in the UK? And how do students from China apply?

A: Business Studies is the most popular subject in the UK. There are several advantages to studying Business Studies in the UK.

First of all, there are a range of different business courses aimed at meeting the different needs of students. Students can either choose to take a general business course, such as International Business, Management Studies, or focus on a specific area, such as Marketing, Human Resources Management, Finance and Accounting, E-business and Project Management. Even students without a business background can find many conversion courses. At the same time, UK universities keep developing new courses in order to keep pace with the market.

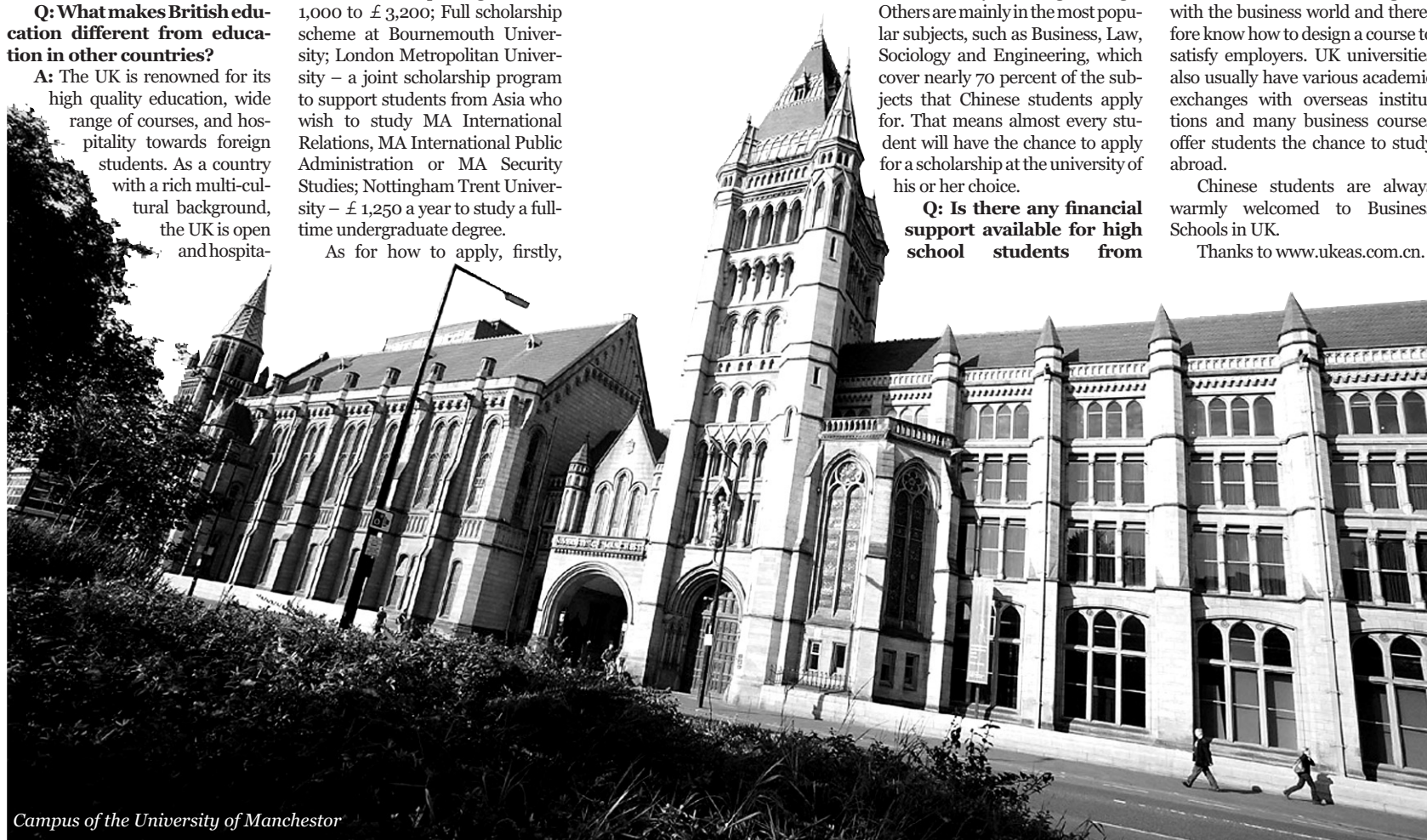
Secondly, the business courses put a lot of emphasis on theory and practice. Most business schools at UK universities have a strong link with the business world and therefore know how to design a course to satisfy employers. UK universities also usually have various academic exchanges with overseas institutions and many business courses offer students the chance to study abroad.

Chinese students are always warmly welcomed to Business Schools in UK.

Thanks to www.ukcas.com.cn.



Campus of the University of Manchester



Campus of the University of Manchester

Oh, my college life!

By Yan Ling

I used to cry heart out for the touching scene in the movies and forgot the story soon. My college life just like a movie with the identical story, yet, the stories in this movie will be kept in my mind forever.

Episode One:

That's the late spring of my first year in college. The news of Zhong's diagnose came to me. Zhong, the most excellent and patriotic youth I had ever known, got an incurable chronic disease and would not live to forty-year-old. When I phoned to him with my eyes full of tears, I heard his confident voice from the other side, "I have past half of my life but I am still staying in college to prepare. When can I realize my dream of being an expert in forestry? I have to hurry up."

From then on, I began to spend most of my time on study.

Episode Two:

It is in the late spring of my second year in college. Many classmates donated money to an undergraduate student who suffered the leukemia. When the blessing music specially ordered for her is echoing on the campus, they were praying for the girl fighting with the Death. I also wanted to give my donation, but every time I find the excuse of having no time to draw the money and choose the way to library.

I don't remember how long I stood in front of the white board that announced the girl had past away during the Holiday. I know the girl would not survive even if I donated my money, but after that day, I began to join in various social activities.

Episode Three:

The third late spring in my college life followed by the shock news that one of my classmates lost her life in an accident. When was the last time I speak to her? Is that two weeks ago? She and I were the first

two students went to classroom in the morning. She greeted me, "Good morning." And I answered simply, "Good morning." Or is that one month ago? When I return the Jane Eyre borrowed from her? I said, "Thanks". And she replied me with a sweet smile.

I realized she was such a nice young lady, but I was given no chance to find more good qualities on her. The other classmates also regretted they have neglected her when they were busy with passing the different kinds of exams.

After that day, all the classmates, including me, try to cherish all the valuable things around us. We are the students acting like the brothers and sisters. We are the good children pick up the phone and greet our parents.

Today, I am no longer in fever of the touching movies, because I am the heroine in the movie of My College life and I am really learning from the movie. Oh, my college life.



Yan Lin, a student of the Beijing University of Technology

► Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see some Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send to shirley_chen@ynet.com with your name and address.



Photo by Zhang Nan

An elementary mistake

By Philip Space

Passenger no entry

If this sign had been pinned to the door of a train, bus or boat we would have let bygones be bygones, ignored the confused word order, turned a blind eye to the failure to pluralize 'passenger,' and have taken comfort from the fact that, despite the errors, the sign makes sense. Unfortunately, it was stuck to a Beijing park gate. And as far as we know, there are no forms of transport in this particular park and therefore no passengers.

Assuming then, that the sign is in fact directed at the park's visitors, it would be better written like this: **No entry for park users**

► Follow Beijing Today

This column is open to those who want to improve their English but lack foreign specialized help. We will review the English articles you send to Shirley_chen@ynet.com. Suggestions will be given on how to improve the Chinglish sentences in your articles. All interesting stories are welcomed. Please be sure the article is written in English, around 500 words in total. Please do not forget to include your name and address.

John Gordon's reply

Dear Yan Ling,

Thank you for sharing your story. I love the way you point out that the "movies" of our lives can be even more powerful and moving than the movies we see on the big screen.

Your story is clear and easy to understand, but there are some grammatical errors that we can correct and language points that we can point out to help your writing be more accurate and effective. I'll focus on the most common points that should be relevant to our readers.

In your first sentence you write, "I used to cry heart out for the touching scene in the movies," when a more natural way of expressing your idea would be, "I used to cry **my** heart out **during** touching scenes in movies." We do sometimes say, "cry one's heart out for sb", but in that case we are referring to a person or thing that is going through a difficult time, and not an event such as a scene in a movie. Of course, you could

say, "I cried my heart out for Tom Hanks' character in the movie *Philadelphia*."

At the beginning of Episode One, you write, "That's the late spring of my first year in college." In this case, using "that" is inappropriate, because it implies that you are referring to something that you or someone else has already mentioned. A better choice would be to write, "It was the late spring..." Alternatively, you could combine the first two sentences like this: "During the late spring of my first year in college, the news of Zhong's diagnosis came to me."

In the third sentence of the same paragraph, rather than writing, "would not live to forty-year-old," you should write, "would not live to be forty years old" or, even better, "would not live to the age of forty." "Forty-year-old" is an adjective construction, so you could say, "he is a forty-year-old man". Also, in the next sentence you state that you "phoned to him", but

"phone" is a transitive verb, so you should write, "phoned him".

You should review your tenses throughout your essay, particularly in Episodes Two and Three. While most of the individual sentences are fine, your tenses are not consistent as you tell your stories. It is very important to be consistent with your tenses when you are telling a story, otherwise your readers may get confused! In addition, neither "leukemia" nor "Death" should be preceded by a "the".

In general, you should feel very proud of your essay, as you have told an engaging, interesting story, and communicating ideas and stories is one of the main functions of language. Our other readers can also learn from your example: writing personal stories is one of the most effective ways to practice your writing! Thanks for sharing, and keep cherishing all of the valuable things around you.

All the best,

John



John Gordon, from the US, is the Vice president of Beijing New Channel School



Photo by Lin Qianru

Food for thought

By Philip Space

Old Beijing Folk Delicious Food

You have to hope that the cooks at this restaurant put more effort into their food than the owners put into naming the joint.

For starters, the 'J' is Beijing is capitalized – a totally unnecessary, schoolboy error. Then there's the word order. 'Old Beijing Folk Delicious Food' just makes no sense. Assuming that the owners are trying to stress their restaurant's focus on traditional, Beijing fare, this would be a better way to write the sign: **Delicious, traditional Beijing food.**

(By Chen Shasha)



Bend It Like Beckham (2002)

Director: Gurinder Chada

Cast:

Parminder Nagra – Jesminder 'Jess' Kaur Bhamra
Keira Knightley – Juliette 'Jules' Paxton
Johnathan Rhys Meyers – Joe (as Johnathan Rhys Meyers)
Anupam Kher – Mr Bhamra
Archie Panjabi – Pinky Bhamra
Shaznay Lewis – Mel
Frank Harper – Alan Paxton

Juliet Stephenson – Paula Paxton
Shaheen Khan – Mrs Bhamra

Synopsis:

The daughter of orthodox Sikhs rebels against her parents' traditionalism by running off to Germany with a football team (soccer in America)

In this scene, she is watching Manchester United against Anderlecht on TV, imagining that she is playing the game herself. She

is taken from her daydreaming when her mother, who does not like that she plays football, is trying to drag her away from the TV.

The following dialogue in this scene is mostly by TV football commentators: John Motson, Gary Linkear, and Alan Hanson.

Who wants to cook Aloo Gobi when you can bend a ball like Beckham?

John Motson (TV commentator):

David Beckham gets the ball again for Manchester United.

He's taking responsibility every time they have possession. This reflects the way he's been captaining England. He's dominating proceedings, hoping perhaps to get a bit more support⁽¹⁾ as he gathers the ball⁽²⁾ on this right-hand touchline time after time. And the Old Trafford crowd warming to the way⁽³⁾ Beckham is taking over, but the question is, where is the goal going to come from to break down⁽⁴⁾ Anderlecht? Will it be Scholes? Could it be Ryan Giggs? Would it be Beckham himself? Because Anderlecht are playing a very controlled game.

This is Radzinski, testing the United defence, and Sylvestre possibly with a chance to break forward on the other flank⁽⁵⁾. And there's the ball that Beckham

really wants. That looked like a body check⁽⁶⁾, but he shrugged off the defender. It's a decent cross⁽⁷⁾, and there is Bhamra. It's a fine header, and she's scored! It's a goal by Jess Bhamra! A superb header⁽⁸⁾, beating the defender, and planting the ball beyond the goalkeeper's left hand. Jess Bhamra makes a name for herself at Old Trafford! And have we discovered a new star here, Gary Lineker?

Gary Linekar: That's right. Could Bhamra be the answer to England's prayers? Alan?

Alan Hanson: Quick thinking, comfortable on the ball, vision and awareness – magnificent. I wish she was playing for Scotland!⁽⁹⁾

Gary Linekar: John, have England found the player to relive their World Cup glory?

John Motson: Definitely, and the best thing is, she's not even reached her peak yet. We're joined now by Jess's mother.

Gary Linkear: You must be proud of your daughter.

Mrs Bhamra: Not at all! She shouldn't be showing her bare legs to people! She's bringing shame on the family. Don't encourage her! Jesminder, you get back home now! Are you listening to me? Have you gone mad? Football, shootball!⁽¹⁰⁾ Your sister's getting engaged, and you're watching this skinhead⁽¹¹⁾ boy!

John Motson: It's Beckham's corner!

Mrs Bhamra: Come downstairs. Your sister's going crazy.

Jessie: I've got to go! Mum, where are my keys?

VOCABULARY

(1) **a bit more support** – more help from the other players

(2) **gathers the ball** – reaches the ball and takes control of it

(3) **Warming to the way** – becoming more vocal in their support

(4) **break down Anderlecht** – find a way through the Anderlecht defense

(5) **flank** – the right or left side of the field (usually a military term)

(6) **body check** – when one player impedes the other with his body

(7) **a decent cross** – kicking a high ball from one side of the pitch to the other

(8) **header** – hitting the ball with your head

(9) **I wish she was playing for Scotland** – students of English would do well to note that not every native speaker speaks perfect English. The commentator should have said

'I wish she were playing for Scotland'.

(10) **football, shootball** – a method of mocking something by adding a nonsensical word that rhymes with the first word, usually with a 'sh' beginning. Other examples include: tennis, shmenis; work, shwork; tired, shmired.

(11) **skinhead** – someone with a shaved head.

By Niall O Murchadha

